

**CULTURAL ISSUES IN CROSS-CULTURAL MINISTRY
FOR EFFECTIVE PASTORAL LEADERSHIP**

**A Professional Project
presented to
the Faculty of the
Claremont School of Theology**

**In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Ministry**

**by
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*has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty of the
Claremont School of Theology in partial fulfillment
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DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

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ABSTRACT

CULTURAL ISSUES IN CROSS-CULTURAL MINISTRY FOR EFFECTIVE PASTORAL LEADERSHIP

by

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There are many cultures in our society. People are living in cultural diversity. Ministers and congregations meet difficulties in their pastoral ministries because each culture in the community of faith contains its unique social and religious norms that contribute to cultural diversity as well as barriers that have to be overcome. Also, many ministers are serving in other cultures by cross-cultural/racial appointments. In cross-cultural ministry, the local church encounters different pastoral styles in its spiritual life. Both ministers and congregations have to consider each other's culture, and create a new culture for them. Cross-cultural/racial ministry empowers God's vision, practices Jesus' Great Commission, and loves others as the bridge across cultures. For this purpose, this project deals with cultural issues as the key to better more effective pastoral leadership. Even more, this project raises some leadership issues with cultures such as authority and leadership, communication and conflicts, and pastoral identity and leadership style.

This project finds a theological approach to study Cross-Cultural Theology by Christology for reconciliation. Within cross-cultural ministry, Jesus is understood as a marginal person in the theology of marginality. The concept of Incarnation is the basis for communication between cultures in ministry. Paul's ministry is a good model for effective pastoral leadership to bridge cultures. Especially, the ecumenical movement is important for sharing cultures in cross-cultural perspective. In this project, spirituality is considered as the key for pastoral leadership. Many opportunities to meet God are

wonderful resources for working together across cultures. Finally, there are visions and suggestions for effective pastoral leadership in cross-cultural ministry to progress to the next step after this project.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Problem Addressed by the Project

The problem addressed by this project is that ministers and pastoral leaders in cross-cultural ministry experience difficulties in their pastoral leadership because each culture contains its unique social and religious norms that contribute to cultural diversity, but also pose barriers that have to be overcome. Cultural differences cause many problems in cross-cultural/racial ministry because of behavior, thinking, understanding, and values. There are cultural differences in the church as well as in multicultural society. They often create conflicts and misunderstanding and lead to wrong directions for pastoral leadership. Therefore, a deeper understanding of cultural issues is the key to pastoral effectiveness in a cross-cultural situation.

Importance of the Problem

In our world, there are different meanings of a word according to people's experience, perception, value, and spirit. They mutually help and influence one another. The understanding of spirituality is different culturally, traditionally, and denominationally. Spirituality is both personal and the shared experience of a tradition. Corita Clarke explains that "ministry in the contemporary United States Church faces a unique cultural setting, and the importance of this factor for spirituality cannot be overemphasized."¹ Furthermore, we have to understand congregational spirituality in cultures because "congregations have traditionally been bearers of culture: they have

¹ Corita Clarke, A Spirituality for Active Ministry (Kansas City, MO: Sheed & Ward, 1991), 8.

enabled immigrant groups to sustain the practices—food, icons, clothing, language—that continue their family culture.”²

Human beings are born and raised in a variety of cultures. Even if people are created in the image of God, they are different because of their cultural influences. Each culture gives us unique insights into how people view life. Humans are shaped culturally and have differences in life-style, expectations, traditions, dreams, value systems, communication, fears, and joys and so on. More specifically, culture has a way of affecting what is important to people, what is the most significant, and how they determine their priorities or values. Even more, each culture has different ideas about how people approach God or understand eternity. Symbols and images are being transformed through the culture. Therefore, cultures have to be studied as the main issue that affects effective leadership in cross-cultural ministry.

However, we cannot know all cultures and their backgrounds. Nevertheless, ministers must analyze the backgrounds of their congregations to know which cultural backgrounds and perspectives they have. According to the cultural backgrounds, the direction of ministry is different for each pastoral ministry. Ministers also need to look into the root of the main cultures to find needs. This approach includes physical, spiritual, emotional, social, ethical, and cultural considerations. Different cultures experience different kinds and degrees of problems. Therefore, ministers in cross-cultural ministry require certain skills. Lovett H. Weems, Jr. introduces Denham Grierson’s three-fold task of pastoral understanding of culture in ministry: “the first step is to name the culture of a particular congregation. The second is to interpret what is identified. The third is a

² Thomas Edward Frank, The Soul of the Congregation: An Invitation to Congregational Reflection (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2000), 19.

process of remarking—to use the possibilities for change and growth, which have been called ‘opening for ministry.’”³ Even more, we learn that the Holy Spirit in the cultural perspective is best at communicating deeper spiritual healings, reconciliation, and growth processes for our congregations, families, and society. The Holy Spirit works as a connector and counselor for us to understand each other in our own culture. We are invited to grow as one member of the body of Christ to be nurtured and to use our gifts in the Holy Spirit to stop the power struggles among cultures. Studying different cultures in ministry is to communicate and find unity in the view of the world. It is to share each culture in ministry toward reconciliation and transformation in Christ.

Generally, people expect other people to become like themselves and expect to change others. However, this approach is not helpful since there is a need for cross-cultural leaders to move beyond cultural boundaries. They need to analyze the backgrounds of their congregations for cross-cultural ministry to become aware of cultural backgrounds and perspectives that are significant. The direction of ministry is different for each pastoral ministry according to cultural backgrounds. Ministers also need to look into the root of main cultures to find needs. This approach includes the physical, spiritual, emotional, social, ethical, and cultural considerations. Therefore, ministers in cross-cultural ministries are required to think about authority and power, communication and conflicts, and pastoral identity and leadership style through pastoral skills such as listening, understanding, communicating, building relationship, caring, and integrity.

³ Lovett H. Weems, Jr., Church Leadership: Vision, Team, Culture, and Integrity (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993), 101.

The important point is that the local church in cross-cultural ministry encounters different pastoral styles in its spiritual life. Both ministers and congregations have to respect each other's culture, and create a new culture together. They need to listen to other voices to understand cultural diversities. Congregations must embark on a process that is guided by acts of hospitality, friendship, forgiveness, and reconciliation as Jesus showed in His ministry.

Thesis

This project undertakes to examine some perspectives of cultural issues for developing parish leadership in diverse settings through the analysis of the relationship between culture and leadership using theological, biblical, and practical measures for both pastors and congregations. The understanding of cultural issues is a good element to develop pastoral skills for effective leadership in cross-cultural/racial ministry as well as in a multicultural situation. Leadership in cross-cultural/racial ministry empowers God's vision, follows Jesus' Great Commission, and practices love for one another as the bridge across cultures.

Definition of Major Terms

Culture: Culture is the largest systematic base of human society, thought, and emotion. Culture is related to social behaviors at the level of social relationship. Culture brings together the base metaphors that guide thinking and social relationship. Most say it means patterns or commonalties of a community to share and agree upon. Therefore, culture is about similarities between people and community rather than identity.

Leadership: Leadership begins with people to create a way of working as needed and appropriate paths to share vision. In the church, it means to serve with vision as a role model and spiritual leader. As a leader for effective leadership in the church, ministers need two important personal skills with others: fidelity and integrity. For cross-cultural ministry, leadership depends on the guidance to encourage and challenge people to do God's work beyond cultural diversities in their lives toward God's will with God's direction.

Cross-Cultural Ministry: It is also referred to as Cross-Cultural/Racial Ministry. The word "cross-cultural" ministry has a different meaning than "intercultural" ministry. The term "intercultural" could suggest "an ability to emerge from other different cultural contexts and create a kind of common area."⁴ The term "cross" in a dictionary means "meet and pass." "Cross-cultural" is expressed as "dealing with or comparing two or more cultures," and as understanding the feeling of cultures, and as bridging gaps to find common ground. It means that people who have different cultures are in common ministry. Especially, cross-cultural/racial ministry in this project means that ministers are serving in churches that have a different culture from the pastor. In cross-cultural/racial pastoral leadership for effective ministry, cultural issues are important factors in the tension in groups. Pastors have to think about feelings, communicational skills, thought processes, social concerns, and expectations in the ministry.

Work Previously Done in the Field

There are many sources for understanding the relationship between culture and

⁴ Hendrik M. Vroom, "Contextual Theology Revisited," in One Gospel-Many Cultures: Case Studies and Reflections on Cross-Cultural Theology, ed. Mercy Amba Oduyoye and Hendrik M. Vroom (Amsterdam, NY: Rodopi, 2003), 227.

church for ministry. Many authors address the questions of good skills and new paradigms for effective ministry across cultures. Among them, H. Richard Niebuhr's Christ and Culture,⁵ which focuses on five types of relationships between Christ and culture, is a good resource for thinking about cross-cultural ministry. These are "Christ against culture"; "The Christ of culture"; "Christ above culture"; "Christ and culture in paradox"; and "Christ the transformer of culture." He has preferred Christ the transformer as a clue to the proper relations of Christ and culture. However, his five types of the relation of Christ and culture are a good resource for missionaries as well as for those in cross-cultural ministry because we understand the different relationships of Christ to culture.

Aart M. van Beek, in the book Cross-Cultural Counseling,⁶ describes cultural issues with the definition of processes by giving three reasons. In understanding culture as process, some issues of people are important for the cross-culture setting. Also, van Beek provides some skills for the caregivers and pastoral persons to better understand the different cultural situations. This book is useful for this project to know cross-cultural personality and identity, and the task of integration. Van Beek's approaches to culture are useful for pastors who are serving in cross-cultural/racial ministry to provide effective counseling and care. He emphasizes that culture is not formed, but changed and developed, by social relationships, individual situations, and other cultures.

Derald W. Sue and David Sue in the chapter of their book, Counseling the Culturally Different: Theory and Practice,⁷ entitled "Radical/Cultural Identity

⁵ H. Richard Niebuhr, Christ and Culture (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1951).

⁶ Aart M. van Beek, Cross-Cultural Counseling (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996).

⁷ Derald W. Sue and David Sue, Counseling the Culturally Different: Theory and Practice, 2nd ed. (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1990), 93-117.

Development” outline five stages of cultural development. This model suggests that people wrestle to understand themselves in terms of their own culture, and make tense the relationship between the two cultures. This model is helpful for understanding the relationships among cultures to know the nature of cultures. The definition of culture and the five stages of Racial/Cultural Identity Development have helped my work on this project to understand the nature of cultures for pastoral care and counseling in cross-cultural ministry.

David W. Augsburger in Pastoral Counseling across Cultures⁸ and Conflict Mediation across Cultures⁹ strives to see cultural issues in the pastoral ministry across cultures. In Pastoral Counseling across Cultures, he creates the word *interpathy* and uses it as meaning to share other cultures in ministry and it should be practiced in cross-cultural ministry to understand cross-cultural boundaries.¹⁰ Namely, he mentions concerns in meeting the questions of culture and ministry. In Conflict Mediation across Cultures, he deals with conflict in a multi-cultural setting and understands conflict transformation as being for a new relationship. Furthermore, he explains how reconciliation and forgiveness confront conflict constructively. Also, he provides readers with pastoral skills to deal with cultural issues for transforming broken relationships into whole new relationships. Augsburger helps readers to recognize various ways of thinking, understanding, and experiencing through the cross-cultural approach.

⁸ David W. Augsburger, Pastoral Counseling across Cultures (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1986).

⁹ David W. Augsburger, Conflict Mediation across Cultures: Pathways and Patterns (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992).

¹⁰ Augsburger, Pastoral Counseling across Cultures, 29.

Eric H. Law's work The Wolf Shall Dwell with the Lamb: A Spirituality for Leadership in a Multicultural Community¹¹ is recognized as a practical theological manual useful in multicultural communities or multicultural gatherings. He approaches in a practical way the methods and strategies for dealing with problems/conflicts arising from cultural difference and inequality of power. He tries to resolve the problem of power inequality through mutual invitation. He says that it is a kind of "we have to go against the 'instinct' of our cultures in order for us to stop replaying the fierce-devouring-the-small scenario of intercultural encounter."¹² His work emphasizes the quality of mutuality of the group in a multicultural setting.

Miroslaw Volf deals with the issue based on the real historical conflict and enmity manifested in his own native Croatia. His book, Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation,¹³ points out the problem of otherness (exclusion) coming out of ethnic, religious, gender, and cultural difference. He deals with exclusion by the notion of embrace, and not by categories of oppression and liberation. Volf asks to learn to see with double vision, from our perspective and the other's perspective. With this double vision, we can truly forgive, and we can reconcile and include the other. He endeavors to re-identify people's identities in considering otherness. His work is important for cross-cultural ministry to extend pastoral leadership such as in the minister's role or the laity's role, or in the church and the wider society.

¹¹ Eric H. Law, The Wolf Shall Dwell with the Lamb: A Spirituality for Leadership in a Multicultural Community (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 1993).

¹² Ibid., 4.

¹³ Miroslaw Volf, Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996).

As a Korean-American, Jung Young Lee approaches a multicultural theology with the concept of marginality because of his background. In the book Marginality: The Key to Multicultural Theology,¹⁴ he introduces a negative and positive side to marginality toward a holistic definition of marginality as “in-beyond.” The negative side “in-between” is related to rejection, alienation, and difference. The positive side includes an “in-both” approach. He is interested in cultural pluralism in North America and himself as a marginal person under the influence of the *Yin* (陰: 음) - *Yang* (陽: 양) teaching of Chinese religion. Lee applies the new marginality for understanding the church as a community of new marginal people. He theologically says that Jesus was a marginal person because Jesus was not only truly human but also truly divine. Also, true disciples were the marginal people of God. The thought of marginality provides Christians a vision which allows different people to love together. In cross-cultural ministry, the marginal way of thinking is an important approach toward reconciliation and harmony.

The book, Knowledge, Attitude, and Experience: Ministry in the Cross-Cultural Context,¹⁵ is edited by Young-Il Kim to provide Christian faith in cross-cultural contexts. Each writer has a voice regarding the communication of the Gospel in cross-cultural ministry. To approach cross-cultural communication for healthy cross-cultural ministry, this book uses three angles: knowledge, attitude, and experience. Kim emphasizes these three in the introduction: “When all three aspects of preparation for cross-cultural ministry are brought together in the center, there is power. Any one aspect alone is not

¹⁴ Jung Young Lee, Marginality: The Key to Multicultural Theology (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995).

¹⁵ Young-Il Kim, ed., Knowledge, Attitude, and Experience: Ministry in the Cross-Cultural Context (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1992).

enough. The three together make for a wholeness, a totality, a powerful energy.”¹⁶ This book is a great resource to understand cross-cultural communication and mission regarding different cultures.

David Fisher in The 21st Century Pastor: A Vision Based on the Ministry of Paul¹⁷ gives an answer to a question through a vision based on the ministry of Paul; “*How can a pastor realize pastoral identity?*” Fisher finds the pastoral identity in God’s Son who calls pastors to service. The term “Incarnation” is the key for ministry across cultures. Fisher uses “authority” before he describes the Pauline metaphors. Finally, this book sees pastors in many different roles such as God’s penmen, fathers and mothers, farmers and builders, servants and stewards, and ambassadors and preachers.¹⁸ All of them are important for pastoral ministry. Among them, I would like to take “farmers and builders” for my purposes. It is good advice for ministers to work with the Gospel in other cultures.

Scope and Limitations of the Project

This project begins with my experience as a cross-cultural pastor in studying literature regarding both culture and theology for effective leadership, because I encountered cultural issues in my cross-cultural pastoral setting for ministry. I approach this project from the perspective of a Korean male minister who experienced different cultural churches; an Anglo-English Congregation as a Korean pastor in California, a Korean congregation in Anchorage in a multi-cultural setting, and a Korean church which is sharing a facility with other ethnic groups. My work focuses on cross-cultural ministry

¹⁶ Ibid., 13-14.

¹⁷ David Fisher, The 21st Century Pastor: A Vision Based on the Ministry of Paul (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996).

¹⁸ Fisher uses these terms in the book, The 21st Century Pastor, to explain “A Portrait of a Pastor” in Part 2.

in the United Methodist Church. The interviews to analyze cross-cultural situations are limited to three ministers and three congregations involved in cross-and multi-cultural ministries in the California-Pacific Annual Conference. Also, I meet with some pastors to hear about their concerns to find barriers and benefits in cross-cultural ministry, and to establish the relationship between culture and pastoral leadership. Furthermore, I suggest that the readers think about effective leadership with cultural issues in considering their own culture and context.

Procedure for Integration

This project integrates cultural issues for effective leadership through the context of cross-cultural ministry, the understanding of the culture, issues of leadership, different approaches to knowing cross-cultural issues, spirituality, and future pastoral leadership to bridge cultures. For this purpose, I designed and administered questionnaires to ministers and congregations of three churches who are involved in cross-cultural ministry in the United Methodist Church. They shared their answers with me through e-mails or phone calls. Their responses were evaluated to determine the benefits and the difficulties associated with cross-cultural ministry to provide leadership style with cultural issues.

I engaged in library research regarding the relationship between culture and church in order to identify pastoral leadership across cultures. This research defines concepts of leadership for cross-cultural theology through theological, biblical, and practical lenses. This project uses verbatims as one of the methods for case studies to examine practical ministries. I have collected and used some resources from centers and associations regarding ethnic ministries.

Chapter Outline

Chapter 1 as the introduction tells the reader why I am interested in cultural issues for effective leadership in cross-cultural ministry. This chapter describes problems and looks at their importance, and then I explain the limitations in this project. Furthermore, this chapter introduces methods to look for better ways for leadership across cultures. In this chapter, I define some key words and review previous works in the same area that I integrate in the direction I want this project to go.

Chapter 2 reviews the contextual situation for cross-cultural ministry with the starting point regarding “Racism and Reconciliation.” This chapter looks at the historical background of a multicultural society toward cross-cultural ministry. I briefly summarize Korean church history in the concept of “to and from” to understand the relationship with the United States of America because it is an important cross-cultural model. Then, I describe the situation of cross-cultural ministry in the United Methodist Church as a Korean-American. For this project, I review the history of Bardsdale United Methodist Church, which I served in a cross-cultural/racial appointment. Especially, I introduce The National Association of Korean-American United Methodist Pastors Serving a Cross-Racial Appointment to understand the trends in cross-cultural ministry.

Chapter 3 begins with questionnaires for ministers and lay persons who are serving in cross-cultural ministry. This chapter provides the results of the interviews and what the issues are in terms of strengths, weaknesses, and expectations. I study what culture is and how we share cultures. The understanding of culture for pastoral leadership in this chapter is examined in conversation with several scholars. To

understand the community of faith, I explore the church as culture. I introduce some issues for parish ministry in different cultures toward the next step.

Chapter 4 deals with leadership issues in practical ministry that I identified after interviewing cross-cultural pastors and studying about culture. I raise some leadership issues: authority, communication, and pastoral identity. This chapter views these issues in relation with cultures. Some interviews are introduced in this chapter to support my analysis. Also, one case is used for finding how a pastor deals with a church conflict. Finally, pastoral identity is one of the most important issues for effective pastoral leadership. As a leader, a pastor should work with many categories for effective leadership in cross-cultural ministry. I introduce pastoral characteristics of an effective leader across cultures.

Chapter 5 is concerned with developing cross-cultural theology through theological, biblical, and practical understanding across cultures. First of all, the Christology of Karl Barth is examined to know reconciliation in theological study. Next, H. Richard Niebuhr's Christ and Culture is provided as a good theological resource to know the relationship between Christ and culture for transformation. Furthermore, I discuss the meaning of the Incarnation to provide a lens for understanding cross-cultural ministry by the theology of marginality. For biblical study, Paul's *kenosis* is selected for the transitional process of becoming a servant for cross-cultural ministry. For cross-cultural ministry, the ecumenical movement should be studied as a practical approach to work together.

Chapter 6 offers congregational spirituality across cultures for leadership. As the community of faith, a congregation forms their own spirituality. This chapter introduces

some spiritual formation practices that I experienced in cross-cultural ministry: the morning prayer, worship service, and pastoral care and counseling. They are good examples for use in cross-cultural ministry to produce a fruitful spirituality. This chapter examines practical ministry in cultural differences through the lens of Pastoral Care and Counseling using the term “spirituality” as a means to know a spiritual community as a culture for pastoral leadership.

Chapter 7 concludes this project with a summary, vision, and suggestion for cross-cultural leadership. Some works are cited, as useful to build the relationship between culture and leadership. This provides a constructive leadership style for cross-culturally serving clergy to think about the role of culture in pastoral ministry. This final chapter addresses preparation for serving in cross-cultural ministry and working across cultures for God’s mission.

CHAPTER 2

The Review of Cross-Cultural/Racial Ministry

Starting Point: From Racism toward Reconciliation

Sociocultural Perspective

The struggle for human dignity in the face of racial oppression is a complex story of politics, culture, and religion, all shaping a people's ability to survive and transform conditions of oppression.

From a sociocultural perspective, the central claim is that competition between ethnic or racial groups tends to produce conflict between them. Recent theories of ethnic conflict build on the assumption that changes in the structures of polity and economy shift levels of competition among groups and affect rates of ethnic/racial conflict. This racial conflict is related to the development of industrialization, nationalism, and modernization as well as developing countries. Racism has to be understood in our polity, economy, society, and culture. First of all, racial conflict is manifest in the form of white supremacy in American history. White supremacy lies behind a wide spectrum of actions, from uninformed indifference to the concerns of peoples of color to intentional acts of bigotry and racial discrimination. All forms of white supremacy are worthy of attention by theologians.

In order to understand how and why racism is maintained, it is helpful to note the distinctions between prejudice and segregation. These terms are interrelated and can be used to describe different aspects of the phenomenon of racial oppression. I will analyze racism through these different dimensions. Prejudice is most used to refer to the act of erroneously generalizing about an individual or a group of people, assuming that one has

significant information about a person's character. Prejudice can produce many negative actions in our society, as it is directed toward persons and groups. Also, prejudice is related to ignorance, stereotyping, and feelings of inferiority and superiority. Daniels and Kitano, in the book American Racism: Exploration of the Nature of Prejudice, extend this prejudice from individuals to ethnic groups. This book quotes from Allport's The Nature of Prejudice: "Ethnic prejudice is an antipathy based upon a faulty or inflexible generation. . . . It may be directed toward a group as a whole, or toward an individual because he is a member of that group."¹ They also point out stereotyping as the most extreme form of prejudice. "Each group develops a distinct set of cultural characteristics; each shapes the behavior of its members and enters into the American historical schema differently in terms of size, geographical location, and situation."² From this perspective, prejudice refers to the attitudes held by individuals about people in different groups. Prejudice is similar to racism in that it is perpetuated by social systems, by institutions, and by structures. In theory, American society has equal structures for every person, but prejudiced structures exist in institutions such as education, business, and churches. Moreover, prejudice is able to cause the separation of people from other people. This occurs in social orders, and sometimes such a denial and restriction is legitimate and right and at other times it is illegitimate and wrong. It is segregation that separates a person or persons from those to whom they belong, on the grounds of circumstances irrelevant to the union which ought to be. Segregation is defined as "institutionalized discrimination which is enforced legally or by common custom."³ Namely, segregation is the denial of

¹ Roger Daniels and Harry H. Kitano, American Racism: Exploration of the Nature of Prejudice (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1970), 14-15.

² Ibid., 15.

³ Ibid., 23.

the right to being. Within racism, segregation is an expression of racial pride. As a result, racial segregation denies and violates, on the grounds of race, that human oneness which is obvious in nature and which is a central doctrine of the Christian religion.

Moreover, race problems take on serious characteristics that belong to economic imperialism, to nationalism, and to religious emotionalism. Further changes in race relations in the US depend not only upon fundamental domestic economic readjustment but also to some extent upon world economics and politics. New technical developments continue to disturb the social and racial movements. Urbanization and industrialization continue to shift the basis of relations to a class structure. John Stone describes that “both industrialization and racial relationships are highly complicated processes and a balanced assessment must therefore view industrial development as a stimulant to change, without being dogmatic about the precise direction in which this change will lead.”⁴ There will be less emphasis on the significance of race difference than upon the solidarity of class interests. As a result, some social scientists have understood racial problems within the whole social movement: “racial and ethnic divisions were becoming the most important source of social conflict.”⁵

Theological Issues on Racism

In Christianity, there are many definitions as to what theology is. I offer only one working definition; *theology is the articulation of and reflection of people's experience of God's self-disclosure in a real world*. I understand that theology is not only knowledge but also wisdom. Also, it is not only a science but a way of life. There is an element of

⁴ John Stone, Racial Conflict in Contemporary Society (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1985), 87.

⁵ Ibid., 15.

subjectivity in it because experience and participation are essential to theology.

Therefore, we read Scripture through various lenses such as cultural, philosophical, and political. Racism is learned through the social structures in which one lives and the racist patterns of behavior one sees. I will reflect on racism in Christian theology from the viewpoint of the Bible and racism.

When I was child, I asked the questions, “*Why do we have color? Why did God make us like this?*” Until now, I have asked these questions from different theological perspectives. The central theme of the biblical message is that humanity was created in the image and likeness of God and that rationality, dignity and community are anchored there. However, there is another side to this coin: the humanity of the racist. In the essay, “Racial Ambiguities in the Biblical Narratives,” Cain Felder approaches racial issues in the Bible by pointing out that “the questions of race and racism in the biblical corpus are thorny issues lodged in a dense thicket of ethnographic, philological, theological and historical complexities if not controversies.”⁶ The Bible stories of Jesus encourage the victims of racism through stories. Victory in the Bible belongs to those who take their stand with love, truth, peace, justice, righteousness, and community. This thought is related to the idea of ethnic diversity. J. J. F. Durand describes this; “it is quite clear that the idea of ethnic diversity is completely stripped of its supposed salvation-historical framework and starts to function in itself as a God-given principle.”⁷ In the racist context, the issues of liberty and equality are raised. The racist uses law to deny people their

⁶ Cain Felder, “Racial Ambiguities in the Biblical Narratives,” in *The Church and Racism*, ed. Gregory Baum and John Coleman; English language ed. Marcus Lefebure (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark; New York: Seabury Press, 1982), 17. In this essay, Cain Felder touches some issues in the Bible such as race and sacralisation in the Old Testament, election and sacralisation in the Bible, and secularisation in the New Testament. This essay supports me to understand the relationship of racism in the Bible.

⁷ J. J. F. Durand, “Bible and Race: The Problem of Hermeneutics,” *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* no. 24 (Sept. 1978): 6.

liberty. Furthermore, the oppressors themselves lose their freedom in the process.

However, theology has something to contribute to the search for true liberty, and should never be allowed to be a prefabricated system. Therefore, a vibrant theology is one in which people struggle together with their contexts in the light of God's word and tradition for their time and place.

Pastoral Dimensions on Racism

I would like to concentrate on what Christian churches can do about racism as a social problem. The United Methodist Church refers to racism: "Racism is the combination of the power to dominate by one race over other races and a value system that assumes that the dominant race is innately superior to the others. Racism includes both personal and institutional racism."⁸ The Christian community must also focus on racism within the church. With many theologians and theologies, there are different answers for Christians. Usually, churches have diverse members, so there are many theologies that reflect churches' social environment and help form insights about racism. Manas Buthelezi obviously addressed the relationship between church and racism from several viewpoints. First of all, racism has the power to destroy the unity of the church: "Where there is racism the unity of the church disappears. Racism is therefore an anti-church cult. It is a heresy in the basic sense of the word. It has to be confessionally pronounced as one of the anti-church movements of the twentieth century."⁹ Second, this article explains that heresies produce a challenge to the Christian faith. Racism divides both our society and the Christian community in comparing heresy with racism: "Heresy

⁸ The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church (Nashville: United Methodist Publishing House, 2004), 105.

⁹ Manas Buthelezi, "Church Unity and Human Divisions of Racism," International Review of Mission 73 (Oct. 1984): 420.

threatened the unity of the structure of the church. It was a tendency to tear the structure apart in order to establish a sect outside the church. Racism is worse than the classical heresies. It divides the church while it seems to leave intact the recognized confessional and cultic symbols of the authentic church.”¹⁰ As a result, racism can destroy and divide our community and society by its nature.

To overcome racism, the churches must work together on new patterns of comprehensive partnership. We are closer to real unity in the church because we have available to us common spoken and written words. There is now a chance that peoples of different histories, different theologies, and different social perspectives may actually be capable of communicating those differences to each other. Within the churches, each person must be known by their personality and their value as a human being. Zolile Mbali concluded in The Churches and Racism: A Black South African Perspective regarding both humanity and the role of churches in racism:

From the Gospels, we learn that God values each of them. So it is a particular duty of the churches to ensure that none are forgotten. When people disappear, lists of missing persons should continually be revised, and the world must be told. When individual Christians face a lonely interrogation or incarceration for their pacifist principles, the churches must support them. When people face torture because they will not betray their friends, the churches must confront their torturers. All this the churches in South Africa are doing. It is up to the world-wide fellowship of Christians to support this courageous activity.¹¹

The church’s role as light and salt in our community is to recover from racism. All divisions of the church are struggling against the tides of history to develop a perspective on life that includes all people. There is the Holy Spirit in our midst. In God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit, churches must see clearly that Christian unity is always a catholic unity-

¹⁰ Ibid., 421.

¹¹ Zolile Mbali, The Churches and Racism: A Black South African Perspective (London: SCM Press, 1987), 207.

in-diversity. Fortunately, some Christian churches are asking fellow Christians to discover the positive, not merely the negative or dangerous, significance of racial identity. However, many churches are ignoring the racism in their communities. The present stage of the race problem is asking us a more fundamental question: *Have we a sufficiently developed program of Christian identity for unity?* Churches can use many programs to find answers for unity, and one of the most important is in Christian baptism. Christian communities also teach that baptism initiates all members into the People of God. Baptism is the sacrament of Christian identity, the occasion out of which we learn who we really are. That event constitutes the beginning of every Christian life, and every Christian has a right to all that it implies. Christian communities can support unity in society, universality, and human rights through Christian baptism. Furthermore, Christian theology must focus on the light that Christian baptism sheds on the problem of church unity.

Making Constructive Reconciliation

I have dealt with racism from sociocultural, theological, and pastoral perspectives. I want human beings to be reconciled in our society. I hope that every person will have the same goal across cultures. Although there is no universal solution to racial alienation on this side of eternity, God intends that there be authentic and visible examples of God's coming Kingdom in this present world through the Church for racial reconciliation.

There are many meanings of reconciliation in our theology and church. I am specifically interested in Karl Barth's doctrine of reconciliation. He focuses on Christology for God's reconciliation of the world. John W. de Gruchy notes: "For Barth, the Christian community or church is the 'provisional representation' of the sanctification

of all humanity, and therefore of God's reconciliation of the world to himself."¹² He explains the role of the church as "the church's task is therefore to enable the world to discover the reality of God's reconciliation in Christ, and to express it, however inadequately, here and now in society. The church is thus a sign of the new humanity that God is creating in Christ, having broken down the walls that divide the human race into warring factions."¹³ Reconciliation is concerned with personal salvation in Jesus Christ. Jesus commissioned His disciples to "make disciples of all nations" according to Matthew 28:19. No one can seriously question that Jesus intends for us to take the Gospel to persons of all ethnic, racial and national groups.

To conclude, I am convinced that racial reconciliation is a key to revival because it validates the Gospel. The world can look at the Church and see Christians of all nationalities and skin colors working together, worshipping together and loving one another. People will know that God is alive and well when they see the love flowing among them for reconciliation in diversity.

Historical Approach to Cross-Cultural Context

The United States of America is a mixture of many cultures because many different people have come from other countries with their own cultures. Until recently, most were European and African immigrants, but recently Asian and Latin American immigrants have been coming. Therefore, both the native-born and the immigrants encounter many issues in a variety of cultures. It means that the United States is becoming a multicultural and multiracial society. Those who have different cultural

¹² John W. de Gruchy, "Racism, Reconciliation, and Resistance," in On Reading Karl Barth in South Africa, ed. Charles Villa-Vicencio (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 1988), 146.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 147.

backgrounds live together in our community. They have to allow others to act without any knowledge about their cultural approach. It is one of reasons that they ignore or mistreat one another. In the book, Marginality, Jung Young Lee points out: “There are also many other ethnic groups in this country who have been rejected, shamed, and oppressed by the central group of our society.”¹⁴ People in a multicultural society continually try to answer the question, “*Who am I, where do I belong?*” To get the answer, they have responded in different ways. Aart M. van Beek explained those ways by three concepts: “melting pot,” “tossed salad,” and “potluck.”¹⁵ In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the mainstream group in the United States responded to them as making a “melting pot” because they were merged as new Americans. Since the 1960s and 1970s, they reacted to new immigrants as making a “tossed salad,” with the idea that each group with own language, ethnic histories, and cultural identities are mixed in the North American bowl. But, that image was replaced after 1992 as the idea of “a multicultural potluck.” People have displayed their own culture for each other, and then have shared and experienced it, even if it is not considered a perfect model.

Recently, the cross-cultural and cross-racial perspective has been used to understand others. Throughout many fields, the cross-cultural/racial relationship is one of the most important elements without destroying both unity and diversity. From the cross-cultural perspective, a different culture has to be celebrated. A broader and deeper understanding about cultural difference helps the effectiveness of Americans for communication across cultures. Even though culture is not race, the relationship between race and culture must be understood for effective leadership. Jung Young Lee explains

¹⁴ Jung Young Lee, 27.

¹⁵ van Beek, 11.

that “race and culture are inseparable and mutually inclusive. However, the cultural determinant can be altered, while the racial determinant cannot. Culture is mutable, race is immutable.”¹⁶ In the pastoral ministry, the cross-cultural perspective has become the most important to understand others. There are four steps of adaptation with regard to other cultures: *accommodation, separation, dialogue, and institutionalization*.¹⁷ For those important changes, many Christian communities have been concerned about their skills for cross-cultural ministry and have adopted ethnic groups and their voice for leadership styles. Young-Il Kim, the director of the Center for Asian American Ministries at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, uses the image of three corners of triangle to explain cross-cultural energy and power to make an effective ministry: knowledge, attitude, and experience. This is the reason why we need a cross-cultural perspective:

Geographically the world is much smaller, but culturally we are still worlds apart. Structurally we have a colorful mix of culture and ethnicity in our society, but we lack a real crossing of cultures, a giving and receiving, learning from and understanding of one another. The door to cognitive interaction is still closed. People are unwilling to interact on any more than the superficial level. Thus the need for cross-cultural skills in ministry is great.¹⁸

My denomination, the United Methodist Church, was created with diversity as a result of the union of the Evangelical United Brethren Church and the Methodist Church on April 1968. However, many differences existed at that time in moving forward to unity. This new denomination had to work on those issues. Also, “Leaders of the church

¹⁶ Jung Young Lee, 35.

¹⁷ Toinette M. Eugene suggests four stages of adaptation to other cultures in his article, “Crosscultural Minsitry: Theory, Practice, Theology,” *Quarterly Review* 15 (Winter 1995): 367.

¹⁸ Young-Il Kim, “Identifying and Communicating God’s Presence in the Cross-Cultural Context,” in *Knowledge, Attitude, and Experience: Ministry in the Cross-Cultural Context*, ed. Young-Il Kim (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1992), 13.

were made aware, sometimes rudely, of the diversity which existed within the huge entity of the United Methodist Church. . . . Pluralism became a fact of United Methodist life as well as of the nation.”¹⁹ Therefore, the challenge for all of us is to see others by wrestling with difference. In the recent history of United Methodism, there are many minority ethnic groups. Also, many ethnic clergy are working in denominational leadership positions. Some have been appointed to Euro-American as well as other ethnic congregations.²⁰ These are called cross-cultural/racial appointments. Lucia Ann McSpadden, in the book Meeting God at the Boundaries: Cross-Cultural-Cross-Racial Clergy Appointments, asserts that “cross-cultural-cross-racial-clergy appointments are boundary experiences.”²¹ Of course, the system of itinerancy is one core element in appointing clergy across cultural/racial situations. The itinerant ministry needs two partners: “the itinerant ministers and congregations participating in the itinerant system. In this sense the itinerant ministry is also the congregational ministry.”²² Therefore, cross-cultural ministry challenges both pastors and congregations. They have to work together for the cross-cultural/racial ministry of the United Methodist Church.

For cross-cultural ministry, connectionalism is another core element in the United Methodist Church. Connectionalism comes from the tradition of John Wesley in eighteenth-century Methodism as the concept of fellowship. Recently, the United

¹⁹ Frederick A. Norwood, The Story of American Methodism: A History of the United Methodists and their Relations (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1974), 431.

²⁰ I was appointed to a Euro-American congregation for cross-cultural/cross-racial ministry through the Cal-Pac Annual Conference. I write this project from my experience to find cultural issues for effective leadership in cross-cultural ministry by appointment.

²¹ Lucia Ann McSpadden, Meeting God at the Boundaries: Cross-Cultural-Cross-Racial Clergy Appointments (Nashville: General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, United Methodist Church, 2003), 5.

²² Egon W. Gerdes, Informed Ministry: Theological Reflections on the Practice of Ministry in Methodism (Zurich: Publishing House of the United Methodist Church, 1976), 17. See The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, Para. 430.1.

Methodist Church has used connectionalism to justify apportionments and itinerancy. In The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, connectionalism is described as follows: “Connectionalism in the United Methodist tradition is multi-leveled, global in scope, and local in thrust. Our connectionalism is not merely a linking of one charge conference to another. It is rather a vital web of interactive relationships.”²³ The word “connectional” has long been used by Methodists to describe the structure of Methodism. Connectionalism has come to mean the Methodist spirit of internal harmony and unity, or the coherency and stability of Methodist life. Basically, it means that all of the churches and members of Methodism are interrelated. The United Methodist Church emphasizes sharing in connectionalism too:

We are connected by sharing a common tradition of faith, including our Doctrinal Standards and General Rules (para. 103); by sharing together a constitutional polity, including a leadership of general superintendency; by sharing a common mission, which we seek to carry out by working together in and through conferences that reflect the inclusive and missional character of our fellowship; by sharing a common ethos that characterizes our distinctive way of doing things.²⁴

Each minister, while a member of an annual conference, is also considered a minister of the whole church. Each local church is related to the various boards and other agencies of the national church. Connectionalism helps to explain why the church as a whole has an interest in the church congregation and in the effectiveness of that congregation’s ministry. Connectionalism provides the means for mobilizing resources across congregational lines to enable the church to begin to meet the challenges posed by suburbanization, urban renewal, racial segregation and cultural diversity.

²³ The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, 90.

²⁴ Ibid.

Cross-Cultural Missionary: To and From Korea

The first Protestant missionary to Korea, Horace H. Allen, entered Korea in September 1884. His legal status was as an official doctor for the American legation in Seoul. As early as 1885, Dr. Allen opened the first western style hospital in Seoul and named it Kwang-Hye Won (Global House of Benefits). Medical work and medical education have been an important tradition of the American missionary effort in Korea ever since. The first Protestant ordained missionaries to Korea were sent by the American Presbyterian Church and the American Methodist Church. Horace G. Underwood was the Presbyterian missionary, and Henry G. Appenzeller, a pastoral missionary of The Methodist Episcopal Church (North), came to Korea April 5, 1885. Dr. William B. Scranton and his mother (Methodist) arrived a month later and Scranton joined Dr. Allen at the hospital. Their work demonstrated Christian involvement in the world for the benefit of the sick and the poor. There were other attempts by missionaries to open schools to teach western knowledge. However, they had many complicated problems such as language and culture. This was one example of cross-cultural ministry for others.

Korean immigration to America began in 1903. Dr. Allen met with the Hawaii Sugar Planters' Association and helped to bring Korean laborers to Hawaii. Jung Young Lee explains Korea's situation at that time: "Korea was in the throes of severe drought, floods, locust plagues, and Japanese occupation. Through Allen's initiation, most who came to Hawaii were Christians."²⁵ After they were recruited by the official agent David W. Deshler, the first ship left Inchon harbor on December 22, 1902 with 102 Koreans; they arrived at Honolulu harbor on January 13, 1903. The first Korean immigrants were

²⁵ Jung Young Lee, 23.

Christians who came from the Naeri Methodist Church and the Methodist congregation of the western district. Therefore, they worshipped aboard their ship. According to Christ United Methodist Church, 1903-2003: A Pictorial History,²⁶ about 7,200 Koreans arrived to work in Hawaii from 1903 to 1905. Soon, they established churches in Hawaii, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. Especially, the Korean United Methodist Churches have been used for extending God's calling since 1903. Also, immigrants from Korea came to America because of the new law of Immigration and Naturalization in 1965. Korean churches grow faster than other ethnic churches in the United States. Korean pastors and congregations continue to be committed to diverse theological traditions, cultural/racial diversity, and cross-cultural ministry in the United States and in the World community. According to statistics of December 2003 in the United Methodist Church, there are 307 Korean churches, and 600 Korean clergy in active service of the United Methodist Church. Among them, there are 368 pastors for Korean congregations, and 232 serving non-Korean congregations by appointment to a non-Korean congregation. Women pastors number 100, and 75% are serving non-Korean congregations.²⁷ Many pastors of non-Korean churches have been appointed for cross-cultural/racial ministry.

One of the important changes in the history of the United Methodist Church is cross-cultural ministry in the 1990s. There are many ethnic pastors who are serving across cultures --130 Korean pastors in 2000 and 232 in 2003, and their numbers increase every year. The first Korean pastor for cross-cultural ministry was Rev. Tongjin Samuel

²⁶ Christ United Methodist Church, 1903-2003: A Pictorial History (Seoul: Qumran Publishing House, 2003), 31-51. Christ United Methodist Church is known as the first Korean Protestant church outside Korea. At that time, they had their first worship under the name of Korean Methodist Mission on November 10, 1903.

²⁷ Chan-Hie Kim, ed., One Hundred Years of the Korean-American Methodism, vol. 1, pt. 3 (Nashville: United Methodist Publishing House, 2004), 118-29. This book uses materials up to December 1, 2003 for this statistical report.

Lee in 1952 for English-and Korean-speaking members of First Korean Methodist Church, Hawaii.²⁸ Some Korean pastors have served other ethnic churches in English since the 1960s. Many of them are serving as leaders in the United Methodist Church. They have established The National Association of Korean-American United Methodist Pastors Serving a Cross-Racial Appointment and meet every year to share and develop their experience and concerns. The mission statement and the objectives/goals were adopted in June 1997 by the Council meeting.

Korean Pastors Serving Cross-Racial Appointment (Sharing Who We Are)
-- June, 1997 version

God, who seeks all the faithful persons in Biblical and world history, has called those of us from a Korean cultural background through the influences of persons and events within the very concrete situation of lives. The same God has challenged us to cross the boundaries of language and culture as partners (co-workers) of God's ongoing ministry and mission in the world.

God of mystery has invited the most unexpected in a most unlikely time and place, and has called and led us to be placed in the midst of the United Methodist family in the United States of America.

We, who are called by God and validated and accepted by the Church, have come (with the unique gifts of more than one language and our cultural values) into ordained ministry.

Through inner and outer struggles, we have come to claim the role and task, within the ever diversifying and globalizing community and the world, through the United Methodist Church.

We, Korean-American pastors appointed to serve joyfully the congregations other than Korean, celebrate and strengthen our ministry to be faithful servants of Christ Jesus in the coming millennium.

Objectives/ Goals

- To bring ourselves together into care and support to strengthen and enrich ourselves for effective and faithful services/ministry;

²⁸ Christ United Methodist Church, 1903-2003: A Pictorial History, 45; and Chan-Hie Kim, ed., One Hundred years of the Korean-American Methodism, vol. 2 (Nashville: United Methodist Publishing House, 2004), 481.

- To voice our concerns and issues to the support and supervisory structures of the Connection;
- To raise among the church members and annual conference leadership the concerns and issues of peace and justice in the Korean peninsula;
- To be ever faithful and loyal servant leaders for the Gospel through the United Methodist Church.

I served as one of the Council members for this association from 2001 until 2003. The Council plans many events for enhancing their leadership in the connection. Pastors in cross-cultural/racial ministry have their own feeling and thought. They are concerned about their identity, connectedness, and sharing. They recognize that they need to have different leadership styles for cross-cultural/racial ministry. The placements in cross-cultural ministry increase every year. These cross-cultural ministers are sure that local churches and leaders of Conferences, in addition to pastors, should be trained to accept cross-cultural/racial clergy appointments.

Case Study: Cross-Cultural Ministry at Bardsdale United Methodist Church

The History of a Local Church: Bardsdale UMC

Bardsdale United Methodist Church is located in Bardsdale, in the City of Fillmore, California. Bardsdale UMC is a rural church in the Santa Barbara District. It is located in an orange grove and the church congregation consists of many farmers; 98% are Caucasian and 2% are second-generation Hispanic. The membership is 150 and attendance is 70 or 80 people; 50% are over 50 years old and 70% of these are retired people working as farmers who own and manage orange farms. Over 20% of retired people worked in schools as teachers, and eight are presently teaching. Most of the congregation consists of highly educated people who graduated from college. Children from infants to high school age make up 20% of the congregation and 30% are young

adults from age 20 to 50. This young adult group mainly works as specialists such as architects, contractors, and teachers. According to my observation, the economic ability of our congregation seems to be high-middle level.

The founding of Bardsdale United Methodist Church's congregation occurred in 1892 with the Rev. George Alexander of the Methodist Episcopal Church. This church's building was dedicated on April 15, 1898. The Rev. Embree announced, "The Lord is in His Holy Temple; let all the earth keep silence before Him."²⁹ These words have been printed above the altar, and are the standard for congregational spirituality. This congregation has many unique congregational spiritual formations in culture and tradition.

Generally, pastors were changed every two to three years, but only one pastor, Dr. Robert Ness, was in charge of the church for ten years from 1982 to 1992. According to the congregation, this rural church fits retired pastors and many aged pastors have been appointed. A long time ago, one young pastor who was first appointed to this church after his ordination, abandoned his ministry because of divorce, and he left. Among 39 pastors, there were two women pastors.³⁰ One pastor stayed only six months because of her own illness, and another pastor stayed only one year.

The members of the congregation are proud of their church that has over 100 years of history and stands in the tradition of the UMC. They want and strive to follow exactly the tradition of the UMC as far as they possibly can. They always remember the tradition and apply it to all issues. However, they do not ignore their own context as they deal with an issue. Their positive struggle between history/tradition and the present

²⁹ Bardsdale United Methodist Church: Celebrating 100 Years In Our Place of Worship (Fillmore, CA: Bardsdale UMC, 1998), 5.

³⁰ 2000 Journal of the California-Pacific Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, (Pasadena, CA: The Conference, 2000), L-13. See also Bardsdale UMC.

context lights a way to ask for their mothers' and fathers' and grandparents' wisdom – those who have already experienced the struggle. That two generations as well as three generations are present in the church as members and work together, is one of Bardsdale church's characteristics.

Congregational members fully participated in its ministry as one in prayers, one in presence, one in gifts, and one in service. This church is serving their community as a spiritual guide through worship, prayers, and community service. Therefore, this congregation needs to figure out their identity as a spiritual group in order to be effective in spiritual ministry. The caregiver for spirituality has to know “the ethnic, cultural, and/or theological roots as well as the history of the congregation; and the geography and the sociology of the place.”³¹ I was the first ethnic minister who was appointed as a cross-cultural/racial pastor for this congregation. Therefore, different spiritual perspectives in different cultures existed in this congregation. Consequently, there were some cultural concerns for effective leadership at Bardsdale UMC across cultures.

Autobiographical Background as the Minister for Bardsdale UMC

On August 27, 1994, I arrived at the Los Angeles Airport with my wife. It was a turning point in my life as a stranger in America. In Korea, I didn't think about multi-culture, language barrier, culture shock, or Korean cross-cultural issues. I could speak and conduct my life in my culture. I didn't need to consider others because I knew Koreans and their culture. However, my life in America has been different from my life in Korea. I wasn't able to speak in my classes, and didn't say what I meant. I didn't understand how and why we gave tips after we ate food in restaurants. I felt that I was a

³¹ Shannon Jung, et al., eds., Rural Ministry: The Shape of the Renewal to Come (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998), 28.

disabled person in this multicultural setting. However, I learned the cultures in America, and am living as one of its immigrants. Of course, I have my own culture as a Korean male. If I go back to Korea now, I will experience some culture shocks again because my Korean life stopped nine years ago. Obviously, I am a Korean-American who is living in both cultures and with both perspectives. Sometimes, I have a question about my cultural identity.

After I graduated with the M.Div. degree from Claremont School of Theology, I went to Hawaii to work as one of the resident chaplains at the Queen's Medical Center. It was a good chance to understand multicultural and cross-cultural ministry. At that time, I worked with five chaplains who had different cultural and religious backgrounds. We shared our cultural insights through peer group meetings. I also visited patients who came from different cultural and religious backgrounds. They were good teachers for me in cross-cultural understanding. I studied about their cultures before I visited them, and listened to them and shared my culture.

From 1999 until 2003, I was one of the cross-cultural/racial ministers in the United Methodist Church for Bardsdale United Methodist Church. At that time, one of the Superintendents made a phone call to notify me of my appointment by the Bishop for this church, and then I wondered what I should do for this cross-cultural ministry because I was a brand new minister and had no experiences in cross-cultural ministry. After I served for four years at this church, I was called from God to go to the Alaska Missionary Conference for the new mission in multicultural settings in September of 2003. Now, I am serving the Pacific Korean United Methodist Church in South Pasadena, California.

In a nutshell, I have experienced many different cultural practices through my different ministry settings. Especially, I think about the relationship of ministry and culture through my spiritual journey. I have learned new concepts of pastoral care and counseling, leadership, and authority in my cross-cultural ministry. I have experienced “disadvantages as well as opportunities,” and “rejection and acceptance.”³² As a multicultural and cross-cultural person, I have learned in this cross-cultural/racial ministry that effective leadership in ministry depends on the guidance of the Holy Spirit to encourage and challenge people to do God’s work beyond cultural diversity for making the Kingdom of God, and to change their lives toward God’s will in their cultures with God’s direction.

³² van Beek, 12. He describes “the notion of the unity of experience” in cross-cultural pastoral care and counseling: “feelings, thought processes, motivation, behavior, social systems, and value systems all come together in processes. A basic understanding of these dynamics is a prerequisite to effective cross-cultural pastoral care and counseling.” See van Beek, 13.

CHAPTER 3

Cultural Issues in Pastoral Leadership across Cultures

Survey: Issues in Cross-Cultural/Racial Ministry

Who Answered

I interviewed, through meetings and e-mails, three pastors and three lay leaders who were in cross-cultural ministry. Also, I met many pastors who were appointed to different ethnic congregations. They shared cultural issues that came from their own ministry. In order to examine these cultural issues, I gave them the same questionnaire. They sincerely answered and pointed out some problems in their ministry. Of course, they mentioned many other issues to help better minister to one another.

Questions for Understanding

1. Is this your first experience for cross-cultural or multicultural ministry?
2. Because of cultural difference, do you have any benefit?
3. What are the difficulties or barriers for your (your church) ministry because of cross-cultural/racial ministry or across cultures?
4. What do you think is the most important leadership style for effective ministry across cultures?
5. If you meet with a cultural conflict, how do you deal with others? Do you have any principle?
6. Did you (or your church) attend any training programs for your effective leadership to understand the cultural difference?

Outcome of the Survey

When I met many pastors in cross-cultural ministry, I found two words often used: difference and comprehension. They recognized that the pastors were different from their congregation, and had to understand each other. Both clergy and lay persons

in cross-cultural settings pay attention to cultural difference, language skill, and different worldview. Therefore, they focus on how they can understand their differences without misunderstanding. They also are proud of their ministry because they act as a kind of missionary to carry their unique spirituality.

They indicated some issues about their ministry. First of all, they talked about cultural difference. Even though they were educated at one of the seminaries of the United States, they didn't fully understand American culture. They have begun their cross-cultural ministry without any training to enter their ministry. In this survey, 99% of the participants answered that they did not receive any training from the Annual Conference or Districts. Even if some of them were born in the United States, they thought that the Annual Conference or Districts should provide a training course because they each grew up in the circumstance of a Korean family. Lucia Ann McSpadden comments on this problem in the processing appointment of the United Methodist Church: "there had been no specific preparation for the cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments on the part of the bishops or district superintendents beyond that which is the norm for that annual conference."¹ To be appointed in a cross-cultural setting, pastors and churches need to give them training to understand their boundaries.

The pastors I questioned talked about language difference. Even though they spoke English well, they encountered many difficult situations when they preached, and especially when they counseled. One pastor² shared his experience with me:

I practice to deliver my sermon in English well. But, some of members say to me they are not able to understand some words what I speak during my preaching. Therefore, I take one class to develop my English skill from a

¹ McSpadden, 41-42.

² He is the pastor for a Euro-American church. He is in his early 60's now. This church is his second church in cross-cultural ministry. He served several Korean churches in Korea and America.

Community College. Now, I have a good chance to enhance my boundaries of ministry. Now, I have different eyes to see and think about this World from them because I use a different language system. I have a different worldview. I try to preach the Gospel in my heart through my view.

Like this pastor, the survey participants had similar experiences in their ministry.

However, they used the language difference as a tool for developing themselves. They know that language difference is a barrier as well as a benefit for their ministry.

In this survey, many pastors mentioned their relationship with their parishioners for effective leadership. The concept of relationship is related to authority, personal contact, and caring. One woman clergy³ in cross-cultural ministry commented:

I have a good relationship with my congregation rather than the same ethnic church. They think me as their spiritual leader. They don't consider my gender or ethnical background. I think that this good relationship is the most important to do my ministry. I worked to build our good spiritual relationship through the visiting, counseling, and administration. I consider them as my sisters and brothers in the name of Jesus Christ.

Many of them agreed with her that it was important for all pastors in cross-cultural ministry to have a good spiritual relationship. In their cross-cultural ministry, pastors and church members were satisfied with their current ministry. Sometimes, they met difficulties in making effective relationships because of their difference. However, they worked together for their mission. Another pastor⁴ who was appointed to a new church in cross-cultural ministry shared his thought:

I believe both members of the church and I as pastor are making a new culture to do the ministry and mission that would meet the need of the communities surrounding the church and the global community.

³ She is a Korean and is serving as pastor for a multicultural church. But, there are no Koreans because Korean people have their language ministry with a Korean pastor.

⁴ He has been appointed to this new church since August 2005. It is the third time for him to serve an English speaking ministry during the 20 years of his pastoral career. His first two year ministry was a two point appointment. He served one UMC in LA for seven years till June, 2005.

They think that it is the reason that God calls us for this ministry beyond culture and language. Furthermore, they are convinced that they are tools for God's mission. They make sure they are bridges across cultures.

Conclusively, most of the pastors in cross-cultural ministry think that they are playing important roles to connect cultures. They have realized that they need to pay attention to differences for effective leadership in their own pastoral settings across cultures: authority and power, communication and conflict, pastoral identity and leadership style. Most pastors who participated in this project by group meetings, and conversations by phone and e-mail, emphasized that relationships with people are important to extend their ministry well across different cultures. Lay leaders who are working with ethnic pastors raised some points to their pastors such as language development, studying and loving their own culture to proclaim the Gospel, building friendships, and working together. Both pastors and lay people agree to try their best to make good relationships for the Kingdom of God through the variety of cultures because they are one family in the name of Jesus Christ.

Understanding of Culture

Culture is a difficult idea to define. Webster's New World Dictionary defines it as, "(a) the ideas, customs, skills, arts, etc. of a people or group, that are transformed, communicated, or passed along, as in or to succeeding generations, (b) such ideas, customs, etc. of a particular people or group in a particular period; civilization, (c) the particular people or group having such ideas, customs, etc."⁵ Most say it means patterns or commonalities that members of a community share and agree upon. Kathryn Tanner

⁵ Webster's New World Dictionary, 3rd College ed., s. v. "Culture."

introduces some basic elements to understand the modern meaning of culture. Tanner offers the following elements as categories for understanding culture: “culture is understood as a human universal”; “[culture] highlights human diversity”; “culture varies with social group”; “a culture tends to be conceived as their entire way of life”; “cultures associated with social consensus”; “culture is understood to constitute or construct human nature”; “cultures are conventions in the sense that they are human constructions”; “a particular culture can never claim inevitability”; and “the notion of culture suggests social determinism: society decisively shapes the character of its members.”⁶ These basic elements of the modern understanding of culture are helpful to approach pastoral ministry in cross-cultural leadership.

Clifford Geertz explains that “culture is the fabric of meaning in terms of which human beings interpret their experience and guide their action; social structure is the form that action takes, the actually existing network of social relations.”⁷ Culture is the largest systematic base of human activity, thought, and emotion. Culture brings together the base metaphors that guide thinking and social relationships. Therefore, culture is about similarities between people and community rather than identity. Also, culture tells us who we are and how we do. However, Alan Dowie, in the article “Identity and Culture in Congregation,” cited Anthony Cohen’s definition of culture as identity to emphasize difference: “Culture is represented as identity through symbols: simple in form, complex in substance because of their malleability, imprecision, multivocality. One can easily posit the icons of a culture – tartanry, cuisine, costume, music – but what these

⁶ Kathryn Tanner, Theories of Culture: A New Agenda for Theology (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 25-29.

⁷ Clifford Geertz, The Interpretation of Cultures (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 145.

mean is unspecifiable, because their messages vary among all who use them.”⁸

Therefore, cultures mix in different ways of living and experiencing in different social and individual backgrounds. Namely, culture is related to social behavior at the level of social relationships. There is the ongoing process of interactive behaviors in social relationships. Aart M. van Beek defines culture as process: “cultures, that is, meaning providing processes, are constantly being shaped and reshaped. They influence and are influenced by the changing social context in which caregiver and care seeker live, and by the philosophy of life adhered to by those they interact with in that changing social context.”⁹ Also, John Cobb, Jr. says, “cultures change and grow, and one of the main causes is encounter with other cultures. ... A culture with sufficient confidence and rootage in its own traditions can adopt and adapt from other cultures in creative ways.”¹⁰

In understanding culture as process, some issues of people are important for the cross-culture setting. Van Beek explains these issues with three reasons:

First, the person is changing continually. Second, peoples’ surroundings, particularly their relationships, are constantly changing as they meet new people and as the people they are used to relating to are themselves changing. Third, peoples’ manner of interpreting experience changes. This means that three important processes are going on continuously: the self is changing, relationships are changing, and ways of seeing the world are changing.¹¹

Conclusively, culture is not formed, but changed and developed by social relationships, individual situations, and other cultures. It is not easy to explain the meaning and nature of culture.

⁸ A. Cohen, “Culture as Identity: An Anthropologist’s View,” New Literary History 24 (1993), 201. Quoted from Alan Dowie, “Identity and Culture in Congregation,” Contact: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Pastoral Studies no. 125 (1998): 12.

⁹ van Beek, 51.

¹⁰ John B. Cobb, Jr., “The Church and an Economic Vision for Cultural Pluralism,” Quarterly Review 12, no. 2 (Summer 1992): 70-71.

¹¹ van Beek, 52.

Nevertheless, ministers in pastoral ministry have to know the basic elements of modern culture, the culture as process and identity, and relationships among different cultures in their ministry. Our local church encounters different pastoral styles they do not experience in their spiritual lives. George B. Thompson Jr., in the book How to Get Along with Your Church: Creating Cultural Capital for Doing Ministry, introduces layers of culture to understand the components of a congregational culture. There are *Macroculture*, *Mesoculture*, and *Microculture*. *Macroculture* is “that large-scale, national layer in which stories, customs, rituals, heroes, symbols, and the like express what it means to be the United States of America,” *Mesoculture* is those middle layers which interact and combine in various ways such as regional, racial/ethnic, class, traditional, and generational ways of talking, and *Microculture* is the smaller scale in “a concrete, local setting” such as towns, cities, rural counties to feel more real about church.¹² In churches, all three layers work together to create their unique culture in diversity for effectiveness. Therefore, each culture respects each other culture, and is creating a new culture for the church by the people in process. To sum up, both pastors and congregations have to understand each side’s culture for pursuing understanding of reconciliation where they live. Ministers must know their congregation’s culture in order to go in the right direction. Culture doesn’t stop, but moves like water in our society.

¹² George B. Thompson Jr., How to Get Along with Your Church: Creating Cultural Capital for Doing Ministry (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2001), 10-21.

Culture and the Community of Faith: Church as a Culture

Every individual, group, social organization and congregation has its unique culture and reacts with others. In the congregation as a community of faith, “culture may also include how people dress, the correct way of worshipping, how the church buildings are furnished and used, and how a congregation deals with conflict or does not deal with it. Everything that makes up the fabric of congregational life is a component of the culture.”¹³ Within the culture, the vision and value of the congregation comes alive. For effective pastoral ministry, pastors have to know the *address* of their churches. For example, the address of Bardsdale United Methodist Church is 1498 Bardsdale Ave. Fillmore, CA 93015. This church is located in an orange grove, a rural setting, and outside of a small town. The church address is related to the cultural face. In other words, the church should be understood as a culture. It is the congregation as a culture that means “both that the congregation has a culture and that it is a culture.”¹⁴ The culture of a congregation decides the direction of its ministry. Also, the ministry creates a culture in the congregation. Culture and ministry react with each other. Lovett H. Weems, Jr. explains that “a congregation’s culture will share countless similarities with that of other churches, but the way those elements are expressed and especially how they are combined makes each culture unique.”¹⁵ People in a congregation learn the religious culture through living in community with others and through religious experiences. As the community of faith, the church has its unique culture within cultures. Like all cultures, “congregations invent material objects that aid

¹³ Weems, Church Leadership, 100.

¹⁴ Martin E. Marty, “The Congregation as a Culture,” Christian Ministry, Jan.- Feb. 1991, 15.

¹⁵ Lovett H. Weems, Jr., Take the Next Step: Leading Lasting Change in the Church (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2003), 59.

them in performing their routine tasks and express the values they hold most dear.”¹⁶

According to Martin E. Marty, there is an idealized pattern of meaning, values, and norms that make up the culture of the congregation:

Meaning lies in the assertion that Jesus is Lord. But, how they translate this affirmation makes a great deal of difference.... *Values* are consistent preferences, contentions that one end and means of getting there is better (at least “for us”) than others. These preferences are based on our deepest beliefs.... A congregation has a constitution. By granting it tax exemption, the IRS stipulates some of its *norms*. A denomination or confessional body may insist on more, and the local church develops its own. But written constitutions and commandments are only a part of these norms. Each congregation also has distinctive patterns of behavior, of worship and of celebration.¹⁷

The church as a culture has many aspects to its own culture such as symbols, language, and building. Weems points out some elements of a church culture: “patterns of relationship between clergy and laity, leaders and clergy, and leaders and members of congregation; and leadership styles transmitted from one generation of leaders to another.”¹⁸ Among them, language is important as a part of culture for the community of faith to identity. To interpret the culture of the community of faith, some terms are used: “the word of God, the promise of the Messiah, the life of Jesus: these must express themselves in the particular way of life of a people, their social institutions, and their political and economic activities.”¹⁹ “Jesus is Christ,” “born again,” or “eternal life,” all are signals of culture in the church. The beginners in the church have to learn new terms to know the culture of the congregation because the congregation has a unique

¹⁶ Nancy Tatom Ammerman, et al., Congregation and Community (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1997), 60.

¹⁷ Marty, 15.

¹⁸ Weems, Church Leadership, 99-100.

¹⁹ Joseph P. Fitzpatrick, One Church, Many Cultures: Challenge of Diversity (Kansas City, MO: Sheed & Ward, 1987), 27. Fitzpatrick uses the technical term, “*inculturation*,” to interpret a culture by a religious faith.

culture in the community. Furthermore, each congregation has different sub-cultures according to location, leadership, people, and events. So, caregivers and counselors have to pay attention to the differences of cultures for effective ministry. Leaders of the congregation should identify the church's own cultures, and even more, sub-cultures, to effectively minister to the people in the cultures through understanding the levels of *Macroculture, Mesoculture, and Microculture*.

In mission and evangelism, the church as a culture encounters different cultures. Jesus said as the Great Commission; "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation."²⁰ The church as a culture has to consider other different cultures in ministry to "go into all the world" with good news. An inevitable conclusion is that the congregation as a culture for ministry meets other cultures both inside and outside of the church. Therefore, all ministries involve cross-cultural factors. All people are able to experience culture shock when they encounter other nations and generations in proclaiming good news. They have to identify and adjust their cultures for the future.

B. Preston Bogia summarizes four identifying stages of culture shock:

(1) the "Honeymoon Stage," lasting a short time, characterized primary by a positive, but superficial, view of the people and the land; (2) a hostile or aggressive attitude toward the host country, arising from the real difficulties in adjusting to the new setting; (3) a somewhat superior attitude, often resulting in shallow comparisons between the new setting and "the way things are back home;" (4) the Adjustment Stage, which indicates acceptance of the local scene as a viable way of life.²¹

²⁰ Mark 16:15, NIV.

²¹ B. Preston Bogia, "Where Are You Coming From: An Examination of Cultural Factors in Groups," *Pastoral Psychology* 28, no. 1 (Fall 1979): 24. This original idea came from Kalvero Oberg, "Culture Shock and the Problems of Adjustment to New Environments," *Technical Assistance Quarterly Bulletin* no. 2 (1960). Reprinted in *Practical Anthropology* 7:4:177-82.

The four stages of cultural shock can be used for cross-cultural ministry, as well as the Great Commission. The church itself is among cultures, and in a cross-cultural context. It is helpful to recognize these stages in pastoral ministry for people across cultures as well.

Sharing Cultures: Interpathy, Dialogue, and Action

Each culture is valuable for each person, group, and society. No one has authority to ignore or devalue other cultures in relationships. There are so many challenges to pastors in different cultural congregations. Furthermore, we should share Christian culture in cross-cultural ministry with people from three perspectives that Rosley A. Karaban suggests, in the article “The Sharing of Cultural Variation,” interpathy, dialogue, and action.²² These three aspects of sharing cultural variations are used for sharing one’s own culture with different cultures. First of all, *interpathy* is used “in relation to interactions between two (or more) people of different cultures.”²³ The term *interpathy* was created by David W. Augsburger in Pastoral Counseling across Cultures: “*Interpathy* is an intentional cognitive envisioning and affective experiencing of another’s thought and feelings, even though the thoughts rise from another process of knowing, the values grow from another frame of moral reasoning, and the feelings spring from another basis of assumptions.”²⁴ To understand cross-cultural boundaries, Augsburger suggests the term, *interpathy*. This term is related to two other terms, *sympathy* and *empathy*. *Sympathy* is “the spontaneous response to another’s emotional experience, which wells up as the other’s pain evokes memories of similar hurts in the

²² Rosley A. Karaban, “The Sharing of Cultural Variation,” Journal of Pastoral Care 45, no. 1 (Spring 1991): 25-34.

²³ Ibid., 26.

²⁴ Augsburger, Pastoral Counseling across Cultures, 29.

past.”²⁵ Sympathy is sharing and understanding another’s feeling or experiences because I experienced a similar situation. However, *empathy* means a person’s ability to share and understand by his or her own perspective. Therefore, empathy is “an intentional affective response rather than the spontaneous automatic reaction of sympathy; it is the choice to transpose oneself into another’s experience in self-conscious awareness of the others consciousness.”²⁶ Karaban explains that “interpathy enables a person of one culture to enter a second culture both cognitively and affectively, to enter into that culture and perceive it and respect it as one’s own. It is the skill of interpathy that is essential to intercultural, and perhaps even intergender, counseling.”²⁷ Therefore, interpathy is useful to share other cultures in ministry and should be practiced in cross-cultural ministry.

Next, I recognize that dialogue is one of the most effective ministry skills in my cross-cultural ministry. In dialogue, people can share different views and thoughts from different cultures. “Dialogue is an encounter between people, mediated by the world in order to name the world.”²⁸ Dialogue helps to open minds to listen to and share other cultural perspectives. Therefore, Karaban describes some conditions for effective dialogue among various cultures:

- Dialogue can occur if both persons enter into the relationship with a basic respect for each other.
- Dialogue can occur if both persons have a clear awareness and understanding of the basic assumptions they bring into a relationship.
- Dialogue can occur if both persons are genuine in the interaction, sharing or relationship.
- Dialogue can occur if both persons are open and welcoming in the relationship.

²⁵ Ibid., 27.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Karaban, 29.

²⁸ Augsburg, Pastoral Counseling across Cultures, 38.

- Dialogue can occur if both persons are willing to listen to the other person by using the skill of interpathy.²⁹

Especially, listening in dialogue is the most important element for sharing with other cultures because listening means that one would like to understand the other's situation from his or her perspective, and then one will communicate his or her thoughts back. Furthermore, one of the communication principles is "send 'I' messages rather than 'you' messages."³⁰ This principle for dialogue provides positive ways to dialogue and listen. The sharing across cultures can start through effective dialogue and listening.

Finally, we need some kinds of action to share various cultures after we dialogue with interpathy. People in a cross-cultural setting have to build, through dialogue, relationships with others who have different cultural backgrounds. They need to make efforts to build trust with other persons of other cultures before they share their own. Toinette M. Eugene suggests frameworks for understanding a cross-cultural setting: "The minister expressing these values of respect and esteem sets the stage for people responding in trust to the minister. They also bespeak the minister's willingness to learn from people in the culture."³¹ To understand and share, people have to learn the language, beliefs, and norms of other cultures. For example, if Rev. Lee as a Korean is a minister for an Anglo-cultural congregation, he or she has to learn their cultural traditions, language, and styles of faith. Furthermore, members of a congregation in cross-cultural ministry have to understand the culture of ministers. Conference and District offices have to provide resources and training courses for cross-cultural pastors

²⁹ Karaban, 31-33.

³⁰ Duane Elmer, Cross-Cultural Conflict: Building Relationships for Effective Ministry (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 172. Elmer introduces eight communications for Managing Conflict principles. See Elmer, 171-77.

³¹ Eugene, 365-66.

and congregations. Each of them has to build a common culture as Christians. Each side helps to build the sense of belonging³² in their ministry. Douglas E. Wingeier suggests an emptying-for-filling ministry that has great implications for cross-cultural ministry:

1. Entering the cultural life-world or life-worlds of the congregation on their own terms.
2. Allowing time for reflection.
3. Examining our culture from the standpoint of the other.
4. Waiting a year to act.
5. Adopting their folkways and thought-forms.
6. Enabling people to make their own meanings.
7. Offering the gifts and insights of our culture to the other.³³

The emptying-for-filling ministry helps to provide practical leadership for cross-cultural leadership for action. With this, love is the essential action in cross-cultural sharing. Especially, it is Jesus' action in His cross-cultural ministry for all nations: "If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you."³⁴ Jesus loves all nations, even strangers who carry out God's mission: "Through the stranger our view of self, of world, of God is deepened and expanded. Through the stranger we are given a chance to find ourselves. And through the stranger, God finds us and offers us the gift of wholeness in the midst of our established lives, a gift of God and of the public life."³⁵ Love is a powerful action rather than a set of pastoral skills,

³² See van Beek, 59-67. van Beek explains about the sense of belonging in cross-cultural ministry for pastoral care and counseling.

³³ Douglas E. Wingeier, "The Ministry as Cross-Cultural Communication," in Knowledge, Attitude, and Experience: Ministry in the Cross-Cultural Context, ed. Young-Il Kim (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1992), 122-24.

³⁴ John 15:10-12, NIV.

³⁵ Parker J. Palmer, The Company of Strangers: Christians and the Renewal of America's Public Life (New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1991), 63. Quoted from Gary A. Parrett, "The Wondrous Cross and the Broken Wall," in A Many Colored Kingdom: Multicultural Dynamics for Spiritual Formation, by Elizabeth Conde-Frazier, S. Steve Kang, and Gary A. Parrett (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004), 68.

programs, or eloquent communication skills. It is the norm of Christian cultures for sharing.

Cultural Issues in Cross-Cultural Experiences

In the cross-cultural ministry, some unexpected hidden issues occur and these can be not understood, predicted, cared for, counseled, and controlled. It is not easy to handle these issues as a leader across cultures if one doesn't have information. Therefore, a leader needs to be educated and experienced for these multicultural settings. Many ministers with cross-cultural/racial clergy appointments mention three issues that they need to be concerned with in their pastoral leadership: authority and leadership, communication and conflicts, and pastoral identity and leadership style. In fact, these three issues are part of every ministry, not only cross-cultural ministry. They will be discussed in the next chapter.

Among them, conflict is a good example to be studied in cross-cultural ministry. David W. Augsburger agrees that "conflict in one's own culture is invariably confusing, and culture assists us in establishing some basic ground rules."³⁶ However, conflict in different cultures needs another principle to control it in different circumstances. All this considered, culture is one of the important elements in understanding conflict. From this perspective, Duane Elmer presents "Principles for Cross-Cultural Conflict Resolution" in his book, Cross-Cultural Conflict: Building Relationships for Effective Ministry:

1. The degree to which shame, face and honor are core cultural values will determine how important it is to choose an indirect method.
2. If the other person has had extensive exposure to Western culture, sensitive directness may be acceptable, understood and not offensive.

³⁶ Augsburger, Conflict Mediation across Cultures, 24.

3. All forms of confrontation should occur in private, if possible, so as to minimize any loss of face.
4. Familiarize yourself with the stories, parables, fables, legends and heroes of a culture in order to appropriately interpret their use in conflict situations.
5. Understand the various indirect methods used in the Two-Thirds World and be alert to which ones are used and under what circumstances.
6. Build a close relationship with a host-country person who will be able to help you interpret confusing situations.
7. Ask God for help in understanding and applying unfamiliar conflict resolution strategies.
8. Scripture is the final judge of all cultural forms; prayer and discussion may be required before some cultural expressions are embraced.³⁷

Especially, pastoral ministry for Americans by Asian ministers or ministers of other cultures includes finding ways to handle conflict by understanding American history and characteristics of American culture. Furthermore, each minister of a different cultural ethnic group needs to review their communication method in cultural distinction because its understanding is important to handle conflicts effectively through conversation.³⁸

The next example is the role of the minister as a leader for cultural issues in cross-cultural ministry. Many skills are required of ministers for effective pastoral leadership. Charles W. Taylor, in the book The Skilled Pastor, defines the skilled pastor as able to use “helping skills, theological assessment, and religious resources to communicate the gospel to parishioners.”³⁹ Do ministers for different cultural peoples and their congregations need some special roles? Naturally, some of the basic skills and types of cognition are required for effective cross-cultural pastoral care and counseling.

³⁷ Elmer, 181.

³⁸ See “Table 3.1: Communication Style Differences (Overt Activity Dimension-Nonverbal/Verbal) in Sue and Sue, 67. Also, see pages 31 and 32 in this book to review “Table 2.1: Generic Characteristics of Counseling” and “Table 2.2: Third World Group Variables.”

³⁹ Charles W. Taylor, The Skilled Pastor: Counseling as the Practice of Theology (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 4.

Van Beek creates some of the following principles for caregivers for effective cross-cultural ministry:

- The caregiver should utilize appropriate attending and responding skills to respect international preferences.
- The caregiver should utilize language in a straightforward way and with appropriate complexity.
- The caregiver should seek to deepen hermeneutical skills.
- The caregiver should practice diagnostic and integrative skills.
- The caregiver should maintain methodological flexibility.⁴⁰

These principles are needed for all ministers who want to be effective pastors because ministers are crucial and central to the development of a religious culture. Benoni Silva-Netto proposes that the minister begins to articulate the difference between other cultures and the religious culture by “knowing the group-specific value systems, typical patterns of personality, social structures, systems of beliefs, legal codes that prescribe and proscribe behaviors, cultural goals, and other cultural processes and products.”⁴¹ In cross-cultural ministry, the minister envisions the development of social relations with the religious cultures. More exactly, the minister helps God’s people with love to integrate their experience into their own way of living because they exist for not only the church but also the community. For example, the pastor attends some social programs such as the service of Memorial Day in our local community, in order to understand the cultures of the community around our local church. More than everything, the most important quality in the role of the minister is love. Pastoral love breaks down many barriers in cross-cultural ministry.

⁴⁰ van Beek, 37.

⁴¹ Benoni Silva-Netto, “Pastoral Counseling in a Multicultural Context,” Journal of Pastoral Care 46, no. 2 (Summer 1992): 136.

CHAPTER 4

Leadership Issues in Practical Ministry: Authority, Communication, and Pastoral Identity

Authority and Leadership

The Meaning of Authority in Leadership

Authority is one of the core elements for church leadership, especially in cross-cultural ministry. Of course, authority is not the same as leadership. Lovett H. Weems, Jr. explains this difference:

Authority can be given; leadership must be earned.... An important degree of authority comes almost automatically with the assumption of a position. Leadership must be earned minute by minute, hour by hour, day by day over many years.¹

In this sense, church leaders should know about and use their authority in order to develop leadership in God's ministry. Especially, the church needs three elements of authority in order to demonstrate effective leadership: "a communal organization, an elected leadership, and the ongoing prophetic critique of both."² We have to know that authority cannot be defined in one simple word. Webster's New World Dictionary defines it as, "a) the power or right to give commands, enforce obedience, take action, or make final decisions, jurisdiction, b) the position of one having such power [a person in authority]."³ Authority means having power and the ability to act and decide. But, authority is distinguished from power. In general, people know that a judge, a police officer, or a chief executive officer of a company all have power. On the other hand, a

¹ Weems, Church Leadership, 30.

² Werner G. Jeanrond, "Community and Authority: The Nature and Implications of the Authority of Christian Community," in On Being the Church: Essays on the Christian Community, ed. Colin E. Gunton and Daniel W. Hardy (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1989), 101.

³ Webster's New World Dictionary, 3rd College ed., s. v. "Authority."

pastor in the church also needs to have authority like power to serve, preach, and teach for effective leadership.

People confuse the concept of authority and power. What is the difference between authority and power? In Korean culture, a pastor has absolute power in his/her church. Of course, pastors who are serving in a cross-cultural setting apply their authority differently for their ministries. Generally, people say that absolute power, like charismatic power, is part of a pastor's authority. Some Korean pastors believe that absolute power is the most important element for effective leadership. Those pastors in their churches use their power as their own absolute authority to manage their people and church administration. They believe that this is appropriate for their ministry. However, "power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely."⁴ Therefore, pastors in cross-cultural ministry recognize the difference between authority and power in congregations in the United States of America. Jackson W. Carroll defines these two words: "Power is a resource that enables individuals or groups to achieve their purposes, with or without the consent of others who are affected by its use. ... In contrast, authority is legitimate power."⁵ Also, Nicholas Lash, in the book Voices of Authority, states about authority and power, "whereas the concept of authority always refers to a moral relationship between free and rational subjects, the concept of power may refer to sheer physical, material relationship."⁶ From the above, we see that authority is different from power in leadership. Harris W. Lee describes the different views of authority and power: "authority is generally seen as the right to do something – such as the right to

⁴ Norman Shawchuck and Roger Heuser, Leading the Congregation: Caring for Yourself While Serving Others (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993), 198. This maxim is cited in this book.

⁵ Jackson W. Carroll, As One with Authority: Reflective Leadership in Ministry (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991), 36.

⁶ Nicholas Lash, Voices of Authority (Shepherdstown, WV: Patmos Press, 1976), 16.

decide or to act – and power is generally seen as the ability to do something, or to prevent something from being done.”⁷ Accordingly, it is not easy to distinguish between authority and power from the Asian perspective. Sometimes, the two concepts are used as having the same meaning for them. But, authority is the right to decide and act by a rational and reasonable subject. Authority is energy to lead organizations or groups. Authority can be given by groups or organizations in a relationship.

Christian, Spiritual, and Pastoral Authority

The authority of the church cannot be explained without Jesus Christ. The church is the organization to express God’s authority in the world. All authority in the community of faith comes from its acts of proclaiming the Gospel rooted in Christ’s Cross. There are three forms of authority to be studied for the community of faith: Christian, spiritual, and pastoral authority. To begin with, Christian authority should be considered before the review of spiritual and pastoral authority. Samuel Southard explains Christian authority as “the power to influence opinion, induce belief, and so lead to action in areas defined as spiritual by a group of persons who acknowledge Christ as Lord.”⁸ Christian authority is for the servant mission of Jesus Christ: “An authoritative Christian is one who runs the risk of publicly witnessing in life and word to the grace which Christ has brought. All authority in Christian faith must take its meaning from Christ’s ministry. He is the source of power that legitimizes spiritual demands.”⁹

⁷ Harris W. Lee, Effective Church Leadership: A Practical Sourcebook (Minneapolis: Augsburg Press, 1989), 76. See Letty M. Russell, Household of Freedom: Authority in Feminist Theology (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1987), 21: “Authority happens as domination and that power gravitates ‘to the top.’”

⁸ Samuel Southard, Pastoral Authority in Personal Relationships (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1969), 29.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 11-12.

In other words, Christian authority is received from Jesus Christ's authority in this world. John E. Skinner makes a statement about Christian authority in his article, "The Meaning of Authority"; he asserts that, "the more the Church offers herself as the servant, the more authority she is given from the ultimate source, but it is an authority given by way of the Cross."¹⁰ To conclude, the authority of Christians comes from the life and service of Jesus Christ, not from our prestige.

Spiritual authority, also, is derived from the relationship to Jesus. Spiritual authority is spiritual power of God that is given by God. This spiritual authority is received from Jesus Christ's authority too. In other words, authority is "the property of Jesus Christ. . . . We should say, therefore, not only that Christ has the one authority but that Christ is the one authority."¹¹ God delegated authority to Jesus, then Jesus called His disciples to preach, and teach His words in His authority. Jesus gave His authority to Peter who acted in the name of Jesus Christ.¹² Also, Jesus' authority is delegated through His invitation to ministers who lead God's people. Christians should recognize that God established all authority. Paul says, "everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which has been established. The authorities that exist have been established by God."¹³ So, if we are leaders in the Body of Jesus Christ, we are authorized by God to act by the authority of Jesus Christ. So, Jesus had absolute power in this authority given by God. However, Christians have to remember that Jesus came not to be served, but to serve.¹⁴ Jesus acted with authority

¹⁰ John E. Skinner, "The Meaning of Authority," *Anglican Theological Review* 57 (Jan. 1975): 36.

¹¹ Paul Avis, "Spiritual Authority and Leadership in Society and Church," in *A Church for the Twenty-First Century: Agenda for the Church of England*, ed. Robert Hannaford (Leominster: Gracewing, 1998), 116.

¹² See Matthew 16:18-19, NIV.

¹³ Romans 13:1, NIV.

¹⁴ See Mark 10:45, NIV.

in His leadership as He preached, helped, cared for, and healed God's people. It is spiritual authority that all Christians and ministers perform in their spirituality.

Since spiritual authority comes from Jesus Christ, He is a model for pastoral ministry. The pastoral roles are to be an "ambassador" of Jesus Christ, and a "preacher" to continually spread the work of Jesus Christ today.¹⁵ One question is how pastors are able to accept this authority in their lives. Pastoral themes help us to accept Christ's authority in our lives: "Discipleship stresses the immediate authority of direct experience. Craftsmanship combines this with the mediated authority of a professional office. The goal of both kinds of authority is the reconciliation of man to God, of man to man."¹⁶ It means that the unity of Jesus' ministry as pastoral authority with people.

I have questions in my ministry. As a cross-cultural minister, I think that I need to have some special perspectives for the authority of ministry. In fact, I am afraid whenever I stand in front of our congregation to preach as the preacher. Of course, I remember reassuring words that Jesus said: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."¹⁷ I ask myself: *Where does my authority as a pastor come from?* Of course, my authority as a pastor comes from Jesus and His cross. All pastors need pastoral authority to support their Christian and spiritual authority in the community of faith.

There are several explanations for pastoral authority: the office, spirituality, and expertise. First of all, pastoral authority comes from the office of pastor. Charles R.

¹⁵ Fisher, 238-47. Fisher explains the meaning of "ambassador," "preacher," and "herald" of Jesus Christ.

¹⁶ Southard, 12.

¹⁷ Matthew 28:18-19, NIV.

Wilson states that “we probably think of this as ‘formal authority’ and may be tempted to think of it as the only authority.... Office has to do with occupying a position by virtue of election, appointment or call.”¹⁸ Especially, the United Methodist Church has an ordination and appointment system controlled or administered by the Bishop. The Bishop ordains pastors and sends them with authority to preach, administer the Sacraments, teach, and order. The pastor is officially ordained and appointed by God through the Bishop with pastoral authority. Therefore, pastoral authority should come from this official authority through the pastor’s ordination and appointment.

Secondly, pastoral authority comes from spirituality. It includes spiritual aspects such as pastoral prayer, meditation, pastoral care, and visitation. When the congregation feels spiritual leadership from their pastor, they give him/her pastoral authority. It is related to the respect and esteem between clergy and laity. Wilson explains, “the authority that the congregation grants such a person may be rooted in the individual’s perceived character and devotion, and that authority is expected to benefit the organization with wisdom and good judgment.”¹⁹ With this authority, the pastor’s role as a spiritual leader for God’s people begins with “the people God has given to us.”²⁰ I think that the pastor has to cultivate his/her integrity and humility for this authority with love to share his/her pastoral authority.

Finally, pastoral authority comes with expertise that includes “special education, testing, and experience.”²¹ The pastor should have knowledge of Christian tradition, doctrine, counseling skills, and educational passion in order to be an influential leader.

¹⁸ Charles R. Wilson, Under Authority: Supervision and Church Leadership (Arvada, CO: Jethro Publications, 1989), 10.

¹⁹ Ibid., 12.

²⁰ Lovett H. Weems, Jr., Leadership in the Wesleyan Spirit (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999), 18.

²¹ Wilson, 11.

Pastors are able to meet many unanswerable questions or difficult situations in their pastoral settings. Therefore, the pastor needs to be educated by both a seminary and continuing educational programs. As a professional, the pastor should prepare for the whole body of knowledge about pastoral ministry for his/her mission. This expertise is one of the key elements for having pastoral authority.

Therefore, Christian, spiritual, and pastoral authority come from Jesus' cross to lead God's people; each authority is the right to act as a pastor in leadership, with the authority to operate their ministry in their churches and in the community of faith. Seen from this point of view, pastors in cross-cultural ministry have to broadly understand their authority in cultural perspectives for effective leadership through Jesus' authority for reconciliation.

Authority and Culture: Rethinking Authority

Just as Christians have contrasting views about authority according to history, different cultures also have contrasting interpretations of the meaning of authority. Authority is expressed differently in various cultures. In some cultures, the pastors' authority is used like power to make people obedient in the name of Jesus Christ. However, from my perspective, pastoral authority in Anglo culture is present in the collaborative processes during conversation with each other.

According to different cultural understandings, the authority of ministry can go in a different direction even if spiritual authority has to be the same in any situation. Joseph Crockett in his article, "The Authority to Teach in Cross-Cultural Contexts," suggests a method for understanding authority in cultural diversity: "An understanding of authority must be viewed through the lens of particular world views. Subsequently,

conversations about authority and the teaching office of the church must include a critical analysis of its historical and cultural context.”²² In cross-cultural leadership, authority should be used for both of the cultures as a reconstructive approach to the way of Christ’s authority. Characteristics of authority in any culture are not easily changed. Nevertheless, they can be understood even though different cultures require different leadership. Even more, culture and authority must interact toward reconciliation. Pastors in cross-cultural ministry should review their congregations’ cultural backgrounds, and then set their styles for leadership with their authority for effective pastoral leadership.

Certainly, authority for effective leadership is one of the most important elements in cultural ministry. Therefore, we need to share our own authorities with one another. If pastors misuse their authority, it minimizes pastoral leadership. Ordained pastors have received pastoral authority from Jesus Christ through their own ordination. Also, all people are called from God for mission. Therefore, all people have their own authority as lay persons or clergy, and they are partners for effective cross-cultural ministry in all cultures because “authority as partnership frames discussion in terms of communal search and sharing in which all can rejoice when anyone gains a new insight that can be shared together on the journey toward God’s new creation.”²³ Also, Letty M. Russell defines partnership as a new focus on relationship in Jesus Christ to empower in mutuality: “[P]artnership - *koinonia* - is a relationship of trust with God and others that

²² Joseph Crockett, “The Authority to Teach in Cross-Cultural Contexts,” in By What Authority: A Conversation on Teaching among United Methodists, ed. Elizabeth B. Price and Charles R. Foster (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991), 131.

²³ Russell, 35.

comes to us as a gift of Christ's love."²⁴ The leaders in the community of faith should share their authority with members to invite them to participate in God's works because this kind of leadership is Christ's style in His ministry. Through sharing, pastors are able to know their own limitations. Pastors have to escape from the temptation to control everything in ministry. Sharing authority gives others a chance to study the pastor and support the pastor's spirituality. Pastors should remember that Jesus shared His authority with His disciples for ministry. It is the sharing leadership that develops a type of relationship process for the purpose of achieving something. In addition, pastors have to demonstrate their powerful authority as they preach and teach Good News for making disciples until the end of world. They should use their authority for reconciliation, as Jesus Christ did, and rebuild the community of faith as a metaphor for authority in partnership for the whole world.

In this overall perspective, pastors in cross-cultural ministry must strive to extend pastoral authority in partnership to shape church vision among cultures. Louis W. Bloede points out the importance of vision when leading others: "[B]eing the pastoral leader of a congregation means envisioning the potential for positive change. The pastor needs to encourage others to share their visions, as well as to present her or his vision in such a way that it becomes a shared vision."²⁵ Church leaders always consider God's people when creating a vision because "a vision is shared when individual members of the congregation hold a similar image, and aspire together to achieve the future suggested by the image."²⁶ The conclusion to be drawn here is that pastoral

²⁴ Ibid., 92.

²⁵ Louis W. Bloede, The Effective Pastor: A Guide to Successful Ministry (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 31.

²⁶ Shawchuck and Heuser, 143.

authority should be used for visions of God's people by sharing in the community of faith because we need authority for communities.

Communication and Conflicts

Conflict across Cultures

There are many conflicts in our lives. Pastors in cross-cultural ministry experience conflicts too. As humans have different cultures from each other, they have different opinions and positions from each other. Generally, people expect other people to become like them and expect to change them. However, we know that this is a big mistake from the cross-cultural perspective. We are not able to avoid conflict because we are living in our relationship. Furthermore, cross-cultural pastors encounter many hardships because of different cultural processes to resolve conflicts. Conflict is dangerous and can break our relationship with people. Even more, people hurt others in conflict. Therefore, people hope to live without any conflict every day. However, people cannot run away from conflict; they strive to find ways to resolve conflict. In other words, people want to live in a peaceful community and personal life without any conflict. However, conflict is not always a negative thing. If people use conflict well, it is another chance to develop and grow. The conflicts provide many chances to enhance strong relationships. There are three key conflict principles for understanding: "Conflict is natural," "We can't always choose the conflicts that come into our lives, but we can choose our responses to those conflicts," and "In any conflict I have part, but only

part, of the truth.”²⁷ We need to learn about conflict and the skills to manage conflict. We should confront conflicts constructively.

Communication is the best method to solve conflicts for effective leadership across cultures because “communication is a problem of meaning, and meaning is a problem of culture.”²⁸ Charles Kraft in Christianity in Culture says that the purpose of communication is “to bring a receptor to understand a message presented by a communicator in a way that substantially corresponds with the intent of the communicator.”²⁹ Kenneth O. Gangel and Samuel L. Canine, in Communication and Conflict Management in Churches and Christian Organizations, points out that “effective leaders learn to practice the communication process in such a positive way that their involvement bolsters the unity of the group and enhances the quality of interpersonal relationships.”³⁰ Even more, pastors should communicate their own culture, vision, hope, and suffering with people across culture. Through communicating, pastors are able to extend their personal vision to communal direction.

Pastors or leaders in cross-cultural ministry need skills to handle their conflicted situation in order to transform conflicts toward reconciliation, considering language differences, communication styles, and personal backgrounds. Lucia Ann McSpadden explains five causes of conflict in cross-cultural ministry: “negative responses to the person’s racial or ethnic identity; worship (length of service and worship style); language;

²⁷ Carolyn Schrock-Shenk, “Introducing Conflict and Conflict Transformation,” in Making Peace with Conflict: Practical Skills for Conflict Transformation, ed. Carolyn Schrock-Shenk and Lawrence Ressler (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1999), 29-31.

²⁸ Fitzpatrick, 50.

²⁹ Charles Kraft, Christianity in Culture: A Study in Dynamic Biblical Theologizing in Cross-Cultural Perspective (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1979), 147.

³⁰ Kenneth O. Gangel and Samuel L. Canine, Communication and Conflict Management in Churches and Christian Organizations, (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1992), 16. On the same page, communication is defined as “meaning of exchange, not word exchange.”

lack of experience with United Methodist polity and processes; and leadership style, identity, and integrity.”³¹ Therefore, they need to make more effort than other pastors who are serving the same cultural/racial congregation. One pastor³² in cross-cultural/racial appointments says about his communication with people:

I communicate with God through my prayers to know God’s vision for the church’s ministry. I set my goal of ministry through my communications with God. Then, I begin my communication with our members to make plans for practical activities. I listen to their ideas and share my ideas for our decision in many ways. I bring my thoughts for dialogue to our meetings. For example, I meet with the worship team every Wednesday to discuss our coming worship and future plans. I work with the Education Committee for Christian education in a monthly meeting. I listen to my congregation, and discuss with lay leaders, and then set our direction for ministry through the Church Council. Many laypersons participate in our ministry because they know that everyone is part of the church as the body of Jesus Christ. I believe that God guides us through our communications. I open my ears to hear and eyes to see God’s will through my communication leadership. I rebuild my leadership with authority through communication.

For cross-cultural ministry, there are communication patterns which are suggested by Toinette M. Eugene in the article, “Crosscultural Ministry: Theory, Practice, Theology.” The first is “the relation of language use to identity” because language is “more than a means of communication.” The second is the understanding of the “role of nonverbal cues” such as eye contact, physical proximity, touching, body language, laughter, and voice tone; these are important for people in high context communication. The third is “the alternation of speech and silence in communication.” For example, silence is a vehicle for communication in high context culture, but is non-communication in low context culture. Fourth, the “communicative rule system” is important for a

³¹ McSpadden, 79.

³² He is serving a church located near a small town in the Cal-Pac Annual Conference of the UMC. Members are mostly Caucasians. Many lay leaders serve the church with commitment. This church has many possibilities for growing in service to God.

cultural group to respond, ask, and answer.³³ Pastors and leaders should know those patterns to extend their communication in cross-cultural ministry.

David W. Augsburger's Conflict Mediation across Cultures deals with conflict in a multi-cultural setting. Augsburger helps us to understand cross cultural conflict mediation through various examples of folklore, cases, models, and diagrams. He provides us a chance to experience various aspects of conflict from different cultural contexts based on those various tools, and ultimately focuses on conflict transformation. Conflict transformation builds the future based on a new relationship, and it creates a new world. A notable strong point in his work is "conflict transformation" beyond "conflict management" in each of the three elements: "transforming attitude," "transforming behaviors," and "transforming conflict."³⁴ Also, conflict is not described as negative and destructive. Conflict is an opportunity to build new, healthy, and alive relationships and create a new world through three transformations. This leads us to accept human differences, and eventually serves as a solution of conflict as well as bringing about a positive outcome: creating work in advance.

From the above, pastors have to emphasize knowing each other as a constructive way to confront conflict. To know each other is basic, but it is the most important in confronting conflict. People should dialogue/converse with each other, and they should know each other by opening up in conversation. This can be called cross-cultural conversation/sharing. It is not based on a desire to change or dominate. It is not based in blame or abuse. This is knowing each other by just being present, being open, and sharing with others. It is a starting point to deal with conflict in a positive way, as well

³³ Eugene, 369-70.

³⁴ Augsburger, Conflict Mediation across Cultures, 70.

as being also a stopping point to block conflict from people's cultural prejudice.

Douglas E. Wingeier describes this as cross-cultural communication:

Cross-cultural communication means divesting oneself of familiar cultural forms in order to enter fully into the life of another people. The pastor or educator adopts the lifestyle and ways of expression of a people in order to share with and through them a universal, transcendent Word. Like Paul, we seek to "become all things to all people, that I might by all means save some" (1 Cor. 9:22).³⁵

Furthermore, Wingeier suggests three categories for effective communication skills and attitudes: asking, listening, and witnessing.³⁶ Conclusively, conflicts can be used as a positive way to enhance leadership with many skills through transformation.

Case for "A Church for all People?": Restory-telling

I will analyze one case for understanding a church with a multi-cultural congregation: "Case Study: A Church for All People?"³⁷ This case shows the relationship in conflict and communication. I will handle this case as the pastor to find ways for management and transformation. This church has two hundred fifty members in a cosmopolitan city. The church is composed of people from eighteen different nations. They use different languages. They are living in diversity. Pastor Bruce Derr, who had experience as an overseas missionary, has served for two years. As the pastor, Bruce has a vision for ministry, and announces the vision on World Communion Sunday of "A Church for All People." Pastor Bruce thinks of their diversity as a gift. He gives his congregation a chance to pray using their own languages. As the pastor, Bruce does his best to make harmony in his congregation beyond cultures. However, it

³⁵ Douglas E. Wingeier, "Emptying-for-Filling: An Approach to Cross-Cultural Ministry," *Quarterly Review* 12, no. 2 (Summer 1992): 36.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 45.

³⁷ Originally, this case was provided for studying in a course taught by Prof. Michael Mata at Claremont School of Theology.

is not easy for them because of their diversity. In their worship, they do not agree because some want to sing the militaristic tunes and patriarchal words, but some do not like those songs.

There are many cultural groups in this church. Even though Bruce interacts with many people, he mainly interacts with the upper middle class white professionals because they do business with good process skills. Bruce utilizes the Nomination Committee to make harmony and to balance the congregation's ethnic diversity in each committee. The chairperson tries to give a chance for all people in the church to participate. However, it is not easy to affect the church because many people have two jobs and do not have enough time for other programs than worship. Because this church has many different cultural groups who live in the city, each group expresses many concerns for worship and activities. In this diversity, Pastor Bruce pursues ministry for all the people.

However, one member of this church challenges Bruce's positive thought about his ministry. She is Ansa who is an active West Indian woman in this congregation. She has strong faith. She complains of her disappointed feeling to Bruce in a phone call: "I have to tell you as my pastor how the church has failed me. No one cares that my mother died..., my uncle and an infant niece died.... Others just called me and asked me to do a job. They didn't even express any feeling. They just see me as someone who can work for the church. What is the church for, if not to be with you when you are grieving?" Bruce shares Ansa's concern with the members of the Council. However, the Council members respond with silence. Some members mention their thoughts about Ansa. Some members defend their positions. However, they do not touch upon Ansa's pain and suffering. Pastor Bruce has a question like this: "Was it really possible

to be ‘A Church for All People’ or were the church growth experts right?” He needs to start his processing to deal with this conflict in his church.

Issues/Interests/Problems. In this section, there are some issues, interests, and problems. What is each person interested in, and what problems do they have? First of all, in Bruce’s ministry and vision: “A Church for All People,” he had experience as a missionary overseas. Therefore, he thinks that he is able to handle any case in the name of Jesus. He does his best to give all groups a chance to contribute to ministry through the Committee of Nomination. However, he does not touch every cultural background even though he tries to do that. Finally, Pastor Bruce has some questions about his own vision for ministry in diversity.

In this case, the main concern comes from Ansa, who is from the West Indies. Ansa challenged Bruce’s positive thinking of diversity in this church through her phone call. She wanted to be cared for by others, but only her pastor and two friends considered her sadness when she lost her family members. She expected some caring from others. However, some members did not provide what Ansa wanted from them. According to Bruce’s report to the governing body of the church, “she expected the congregation to stand with her in her grieving, and few of us took time to reach out to her.” In other words, she needed spiritual caring and comfort from church members. However, some people called to invite her to join a committee meeting. For example, Ruth asserted her right to invite her back to work. This caused some problems because Ansa felt that the church was not touched by her pains and grieving. Pastor Bruce tried to discuss his conversation with Ansa with the governing body, but he could not

successfully discuss it because Ruth and some members made an excuse rather than trying to understand Ansa's feeling.

Ruth is the person who asked Ansa to do some work for one committee. Ruth, who was born and raised in New England, hoped that Ansa would come back to join her Mission Committee. Ruth wanted to help her to begin a normal life in the congregation. Ruth thought that her invitation was her way of caring. She did not think that Ansa would be wounded by the invitation. When Pastor Bruce mentioned Ansa's call and her feeling, Ruth responded defensively. She apparently did not try to understand Ansa's feeling. Ruth's response could be coming from her cultural background. However, Ruth should have understood another cultural perspective when she approached Ansa's feelings and situation. This is very important in human relationships. Ruth did not think about this seriously, perhaps because she was in the major cultural group in this church, so she did not consider a minority perspective.

There were also some problems in church committees. The Worship Committee did not cover all the concerns and interests of the people in their worship plans. This committee covered one group in the church. For example, they chose some missionary hymnals. But, some did not like hymnals like that. Also, the Nomination Committee tried to balance each committee among the cultural groups. However, many people were not able to work as members because they were busy. As a result, the Nomination Committee failed to have equality among the different cultural groups. Next, the Mission Committee invited Ansa to be a member after she lost some family members. This might have been all right, but they did not think about the nature of church for people. Church is not an organization like some other social groups. The

Christian church is the body of Jesus Christ. Persons as part of the body have to function for each other. Before the invitation, they needed to show their sympathy for Ansa and consolation for her as children of Jesus Christ. Even more, Pastor Bruce needed to educate them as to their Christian roles as disciples of Jesus Christ, as well as to his vision statement.

Given these issues and problems, what can the pastor and members do for reconciliation in this diversity? This is an important question to ask, in order to solve these conflicts in this church. As a mediator, the pastor is able to play his or her role for all the people. The mediators strive to “sharpen their basic skills of empathy, active listening, sensitivity to needs of parties, sense of timing, verbal and nonverbal communication skills, capacity to maintain neutrality while remaining in contact, and ability to understand the stage of negotiation and conflict resolution.”³⁸ In this case, Bruce has to understand the interests and backgrounds of each. Ansa and Ruth are key persons to converse with in this conflict. The pastor, as a mediator, can suggest they meet together and talk about their deep feeling to find reconciliation. There is a process for solving the conflict.

Processing and Communication. The pastor has to talk with two persons, Ansa and Ruth, to make “A Church for All People.” Of course, as a mediator, he/she should provide a comfortable place for both sides to converse. This pastor does not judge but helps their reconciliation. Even more, he/she will work towards caring for the congregation members better. The pastor suggests they meet in the church fellowship room to talk. The pastor places three chairs facing each other, and prepares some cookies and tea to help them feel comfortable and relaxed. The pastor explains this

³⁸ Augsburg, Conflict Mediation across Cultures, 197.

process of communication, telling them some of the requirements for this meeting, such as no interrupting, no argument directly, keeping confidentiality, and showing respect. They talk to one another in the presence of the pastor. The pastor, as a mediator, listens to the interests and issues of each in this case. Two forms of communication that are valuable for mediators are paraphrasing and summarizing. I use these forms that I learned from our classes in communication toward reconciliation.

The following conversation demonstrates my communication skills for conflict transformation through paraphrasing and summarizing. I, playing Pastor Bruce as a mediator, talk to Ansa and Ruth. Of course, I am not able to describe the complete conversation, but just this short verbatim.

P: Pastor A: Ansa R: Ruth

(Pastor meets Ansa and Ruth at the church fellowship room in the evening. After they shake hands, they take their seats.)

P1: Thank you for coming to talk! I hope that you feel this room is comfortable. Here are some cookies and tea. Please feel free to eat and drink. *(Pause for shortly for drinking tea)* I hope that this meeting is a good chance to understand each other and I hope that understanding each other, and our agreement based on the our understanding, will help us to fulfill our vision of "A Church for All People." Now, we need to listen to the concerns of each of us. I, as a mediator, do not judge or decide. I just want to help you. Feel comfortable and speak freely, but please do not forget to be as open-minded as possible. Who wants to speak first?

A1: I do. I would like to tell my disappointment with the whole congregation because our church did not care for me enough when I lost my family members recently. I expected good pastoral care from our church members and love like a family. But they did not. Also, I didn't understand when Ruth asked me to join her Mission Committee.

P2: So, then, Ansa, you think that our church did not reach your hope as sisters and brothers in Christ. Therefore, you felt our church was not for all people. Also, you were disappointed in Ruth's suggestion because you needed her consolation rather than join in business affairs.

A2: Yes, Pastor!

P2: Ruth, do you understand what Ansa said?

R2: Yes.

P2: Now, we want to listen to what your concern is, Ruth.

R2: I invited Ansa in a caring way because activity can help you to come back to normal life from your sadness.

P3: So, Ruth, you invited her to help her resume her normal life in our community of faith. You considered your invitation as your method to comfort her.

R3: Yes! I did not want to make any problem between Ansa and me. I hoped and intended to help her. I wanted her to understand my real intent when I asked her to join our committee.

P3: Ansa, do you understand what Ruth said?

A3: Yes.

~~~~~ (This is a possibility of continuing conversation.)

P4: OK! We have listened to the interests and concerns of each. Now we understand each other. I believe and pray that our church is for all people. We have many different cultural backgrounds, and many different groups. Therefore, we should think about our future ministry direction from this case. I will work with you and many committees on this. We will plan our pastoral care for Ansa, and people who need pastoral care. Ruth! Ansa understood your invitation, so your committee can invite her again after we touch her spiritually. Let us pray! *(The pastor prays for the work of the Holy Spirit in this process and future.)*

This communication basically followed the guideline for mediation: Opening statement

→ The story-telling stage → The problem-solving stage → The agreement stage.<sup>39</sup> The

mediator listens to both issues and concerns carefully, and then helps each speaker to

understand his or her own statement and the other's. Even more, the mediator should

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<sup>39</sup> Prof. Mata handed this out to students in the class, "Basic Mediation Skills," Fall semester, 2000.



pay attention to staying in balance for one another in the conversation. During the communication, the mediator should check the body language of each because it is important to understand the speakers' feeling. If possible, the mediator is able to note their conversation on paper or on whiteboard. This will help to catch the key points for mediation and the next steps. However, if it bothers anyone to have deeper conversation, it isn't a necessary part of the process for solving conflicts. Finally, the mediator leads the agreements that both sides understand and support for reconciliation.

Analysis for Solving: Values. In this case, the pastor should learn some approaches before making agreements for this church. These are the cultural-social approach, biblical-theological approach, and pastoral approach. First of all, I analyze this case from the cultural-social approach. This church needs to pay attention to each cultural background of the members because they have different expectations according their own cultures. "Conflict in all cultures is characterized by multilevel communication, alternate movement between subtle cues and visible behaviors, intricate combinations of covert responses and overt reactions, ambivalent feelings and polarized perspectives, defensive strategies of concealment and offensive attempts to provoke a crisis, and so on."<sup>40</sup> In this case, the Anglo culture is predominant in the church. Ansa comes from the West Indian culture. Therefore, this different culture causes some conflicts. The pastor has to study these different cultural needs and expectations in his/her ministry for all people. This processing is a step toward mediation that "is not only the ability to define and clarify, to separate and discern, to link and reconcile opposites; it is also the capacity to absorb tension, to suffer misunderstanding, to accept

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<sup>40</sup> Augsburg, Conflict Mediation across Cultures, 24.

rejection, and to bear the pain of others' estrangement."<sup>41</sup> The pastor, as a mediator, should clearly understand the dominant culture and other cultures.

Next, there is the biblical-theological approach to this case, for which Christians have to review the nature and mission of the church. The mission of the Church is "to make disciples of Jesus Christ by proclaiming of the good news of God's grace and by exemplifying Jesus' command to love God and neighbor, thus seeking the fulfillment of God's reign and realm in the world."<sup>42</sup> The Church works for this mission "to the ends of the earth."<sup>43</sup> In order to accomplish this mission, all Christians gather together. The pastor should educate and preach this nature and mission of the Church. This church needs a Bible Study group or a Spiritual Activity group to learn the role of the Church in this world rather than working through many committees. If they had spiritual groups to care for the grief of each, Ansa would have been cared for by that group. Conflicts of the church should be handled in spiritual ways because the Holy Spirit created the church and is working in all ministries because all of us are one in Jesus Christ.<sup>44</sup> Theologically, it is the way toward reconciliation. Reconciliation is for "the restoration and healing of a damaged humanity" and "the reconstruction of a more just and safe society."<sup>45</sup> It is one of the goals in dealing with conflicts by transformation.

Finally, there is the pastoral approach in this case. Ansa needed pastoral care and the members' comfort. Generally, the pastor is a counselor for the congregation members. Furthermore, the pastor is a healer to heal members' wounded hearts.

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 191.

<sup>42</sup> The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, 87.

<sup>43</sup> Acts 1:8b, NIV.

<sup>44</sup> See Galatians, 3:28

<sup>45</sup> Robert J. Schreiter, The Ministry of Reconciliation: Spirituality and Strategies (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1998), 65.

Therefore, pastoral ministry focuses on healing for a personal caring ministry. In the multicultural ministry, pastors are interested in making their church healthy by the healing process. Then, the church can be the light and salt in this society. Pastoral ministry for healing enters “a cycle of forgiveness.”<sup>46</sup> A pastoral approach for conflict cases helps the pastor to understand the congregation’s interests and issues in God’s grace and forgiveness.

Agreement for Reconciliation: Short and Long Term. Finally, I will think about some agreements in this case to solve this conflict. These agreements have to satisfy each party. Therefore, many discussions and much processing are needed to find both short-term agreements and long-term agreements for this church.

As a short-term agreement, this church is able to offer a memorial service for Ansa’s family. The memorial service provides a chance to comfort Ansa in her disappointment. Members will share their care with Ansa and her family. Also, it is a good chance to understand different cultural funeral services. Therefore, the memorial service is an opportunity to reduce future conflicts in this church. Through this service, the pastor can console both Ansa and Ruth, and the whole congregation. There is, however, another short-term agreement. If I were the pastor for this church, I would like to make spiritual groups for relationship-building such as Bible study, prayer groups, and some cross-cultural meetings for spirituality. Since each cultural group has their own spiritual movements, they can exchange their spiritual background and expectation through these groups. The Church is the body of Jesus Christ. Therefore, conflicts in the Church can be solved by the power of the Holy Spirit.

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<sup>46</sup> Schrock-Shenk and Ressler, 121.

As a long-term agreement, I would like to suggest a Spiritual Church Retreat yearly for sharing. For this retreat, they prepare and discuss many things. Naturally, they will come to understand each concern such as gender, age, ethnicity, power, clergy, and laity. Members will find ways to handle conflict in the church by themselves. The pastor will guide their spiritual life through this spiritual retreat. Next, this church should use many languages in ministry. If possible, the pastor can begin a language ministry. For example, the pastor can put to work lay-leaders who represent each language and cultural group because it is difficult to recruit committee members from all cultural groups simply by the Nomination Committee. As another long-term agreement, I recommend creating a Center for Cultural Study, which will study each culture and will support the church's ministry; the center will publish articles to introduce the ministry and cultural activities; in addition, the center can sponsor Cultural Nights for different groups to know and understand each other.

In conclusion, all members should pray and believe in the work of the Holy Spirit in this church. The pastor has to visit members to care for and comfort them. Lay people have their relationship through their fellowship to care for and comfort each other. Also, members may begin to think that conflict is not a bad sign, but another chance to develop. I think that this church shall find ways to enhance ministry in this process. They are able to make "A Church for All People" as the body of Jesus Christ. Jesus worked to transform human conflict in the world. He strived to create whole relationships from broken relationships between humans and between God and humans. In transforming a conflict, first of all, Jesus informed himself as to who people say he is. He informed the people of who he is. He disclosed himself as love, and he revealed

God in disclosing himself as love. He shared himself with people as love. He created relationships in the sharing, and built a new life and a new world. Finally, Jesus worked to stop wrong traditions (conflict) in the sight of God, and he created the kingdom of God in the present and future (transformation). He worked to bring transformation from conflicts related to gender, race, language, class and so on. Jesus' ministry is a work of conflict transformation through cross-cultural communication.

### Pastoral Identity and Leadership Style: The Effective Pastor

#### Pastoral Identity

"*Who am I?*" is the basic question to find out one's concept of identity. For a pastor, pastoral identity is based on the calling of God for God's purpose and vision. In the Bible, God called persons for mission with a covenant. God called Noah, Abram and Sarai, Moses, Samuel, many prophets, and Paul. God called them for different missions of God's plan for people and history. Then, Jesus called twelve disciples for His ministry. They were in the relationship with God and Jesus. The call of God is not easy to find simply as pastoral identity. Therefore, pastors have to be called through more specific experience for pastoral ministry. David Fisher emphasizes the call of ministry for pastors:

Pastoral ministry, whether in the first century or the twenty-first, requires those of us who have been captured by Christ to lead God's people by climbing up on an altar as a way of life. It is the call given to all God's people but uniquely experienced by Christian leaders, especially pastors. Our master also calls us to carry his cross (Luke 9:23). By the use of this double sacrificial metaphor Paul indicates that our pastoral ministry, like his, is uniquely sacrificial and therefore painful.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Fisher, 103-04.

Pastoral identity is how we feel about ourselves in relation to others. Namely, identity has to be understood with the sense of belonging. Christians ask themselves questions to find who they are in this world. Among them, pastors try to find pastoral identity in the community. They are called by people “Clergy, Rev., Preacher, or Pastor.” Also, the pastoral identity of the ministry is related to pastoral authority and leadership style, and describes “the ways in which one’s faith tradition and personal appropriation of that tradition shape or organize one’s identity and function in the practice of ministry.”<sup>48</sup> Even more, identity is “not simply a matter of linear stability but a highly dynamic, evolving, and intrinsically relational process.”<sup>49</sup> The conclusion to be drawn here is that pastors differently demonstrate their leadership style with callings and authorities according to their definition of pastoral identity.

Furthermore, pastoral identity is consistently formed by racial/cultural identity. Derald W. Sue and David Sue in the chapter of their book entitled “Radical/Cultural Identity Development” outline five stages of cultural development: conformity, dissonance, resistance and immersion, introspection, and integrative awareness.<sup>50</sup> This model provides information for people who struggle with identity “to understand themselves in terms of their *own culture*, the *dominant culture*, and the *oppressive relationship* between the two cultures.”<sup>51</sup> Also, this model is helpful for understanding the relationships among cultures by knowing what the nature of culture is. At the stage of conformity, the culturally different person unconsciously accepts an inferior, self-deprecating position in society; the individual sees his/her non-dominant group as inferior,

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<sup>48</sup> Nancy J. Ramsay, Pastoral Diagnosis: A Resource for Ministries of Care and Counseling (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998), 76.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 84.

<sup>50</sup> Sue and Sue, 93-117.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 96.

and aspires to the dominant culture. At the stage of dissonance, the culturally different individual experiences conflict and tends to deny the dominant culture. At the stage of resistance and immersion, the person learns and appreciates his/her own culture with three affective feelings: “*guilt, shame, and anger.*”<sup>52</sup> At the stage of introspection, the individual has his/her own values and self. Also, “there is now a movement into understanding potential differences in oppression that other groups might have experienced.”<sup>53</sup> Finally, there is the stage of integrative awareness, in which the minority culture has strong commitment and desire to remove all forms of oppression. Therefore, the five stages of “Racial/Cultural Identity Development” have helped to illustrate the relationship between identity and cultures for pastoral identity in cross-cultural ministry.

In cross-cultural ministry, pastors and family members have questions about their identity. They ask themselves these questions: “*Who am I in this situation? Am I a leader or a guest in this church?*” Of course, a congregation in cross-cultural/racial ministry asks how it finds a congregational identity as one ethnic church. The chair of the Staff-Parish Relations Committee of one UMC shares her first experience of seeing her current pastor:

It was a shock when my pastor entered at our introductory meeting with the District Superintendent. Members of this church are all European-American and speak in English. But, my pastor came from Korea and is a woman. The SPRC met and welcomed her to be the pastor for us. After we finished our meeting, some members of the SPRC asked me whether we would think about who we were. They worried if she knew our identity and tradition. It was one of the big issues at that time.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 103.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 105.

<sup>54</sup> This statement came from the chair of SPRC of European-American in UMC who had a Korean woman as her pastor.

Many pastors have similar feelings when they meet members of the SPRC through cross-cultural/racial appointments. One pastor<sup>55</sup> who is serving an Anglo church felt that he was not a pastor for this church, but a stranger:

I never forget my first preaching. When I stood in front of the people for preaching, I was embarrassed because I was the only Korean. I wondered how I could preach to them. Also, I confused my pastoral role and pastoral identity. I counseled them about their children. However, I didn't know the school system of the United States because I was educated in another country. I couldn't answer their questions. I struggled about my identity as a pastor for them.

However, they found their own identity for both the pastor and the church in their ministry. They formed new identity by learning, communicating, and negotiating with one another. For Christians, Jesus Christ is the center for new formation across cultures. Jung Young Lee accentuates the centered Christ-Jesus with new marginality: "He [Jesus Christ] is the new marginal person *par excellence*, because in him every marginal determinant is nullified, and every one can overcome his or her marginality. ... All people live in harmony and peace. The creative core of Christ-Jesus includes all things. It is the authentic center where God reigns over the world."<sup>56</sup> Both pastors and congregations in cross-cultural ministry are able to find their new vision from the Scripture, especially from the story of the Pentecost, to make Christian identity and harmony beyond cultures.

The answer to this question "*Who is the minister?*" comes from Jesus' ministry. The answer is for ministers and the pastors who serve as the leaders of a congregation. The nature of the minister as a caregiver is love. We ministers know that it is the most important pastoral personal nature in our ministry. We know that we should find one

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<sup>55</sup> He is a solo pastor for a small congregation in a rural setting. Around him, there is no Korean.

<sup>56</sup> Jung Young Lee, 98-99.



lost coin and sheep, and care about them. We know that we have to offer our loving concerns to people. However, it is not easy to minister to people because they have concerns in many areas. Many ministers would like to love other things rather than caring for the people of God. However, “the pastor is called to be a ‘professional’ caregiver in that he or she must adhere to high standards of practice. The pastor must be sincere in expressions of caring by words and actions but at the same time must guard against overstepping boundaries.”<sup>57</sup> Thus, Jesus’ love expresses the pastoral personal role of ministers as their identities.

In order to be an effective pastoral leader, a pastor must have responsibilities of three beings: “a role model, a visionary, and a spiritual leader.”<sup>58</sup> In addition, pastors’ responsibilities are extended as a public minister for all people beyond our members. The pastor is “the resource person, the consultant, who assists the group with helpful information and suggestions.”<sup>59</sup> With three beings, the pastor educates groups and persons or arranges for them to be involved in our events. Even more, the pastor focuses on our commitment and discipleship through preaching education. Bloede says, “our ministry is mutual ministry in which we are supportive of one another.”<sup>60</sup> Therefore, all pastors consider each person as one part of the Body of Jesus Christ. They are partners for effective ministry with vision through all cultures.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Bloede, 8.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 28.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 126.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 76.

<sup>61</sup> See *ibid.*, 84. I like some essential characteristics of effective church administration: 1. Shared sense of vision and purpose, 2. Mutual consideration and respect between clergy and laity, 3. Participatory decision making, 4. Clear communication, and 5. Awareness of environment.

### Leadership Style as a Leader

Lovett H. Weems, Jr. defines leadership with four key elements for local church pastors in using vision, team, culture, and integrity: “the development and articulation of a shared vision, motivation of those key people without whom that vision cannot become a reality, and gaining the cooperation of most of the people involved.”<sup>62</sup> Also, Alan E. Nelson suggests three themes for leaders, in his book Leading Your Ministry, to understand leadership: “a person who is ahead of others”; “the person with the most responsibility in an organization”; and “the person or persons with the most influence in a leadership relationship.”<sup>63</sup> These qualities are important for dynamic effective leadership in cross-cultural ministry too. A leader exists in the center for leadership. Therefore, a leader must encourage people “in confronting the challenge, adjusting their values, changing perspectives, and learning new habits.”<sup>64</sup> As the pastor-in-charge at the church in a cross-cultural/racial appointment, I had to consider many things for the church’s ministry: worship, preaching, education, sacraments, care and counseling, administration, evangelical programs, and visitation across cultures. For my responsibility as the cross-cultural minister, effective leadership was to think about something before the people thought about it, to show the direction, to share my vision with people to work together, and to lead them.

With pastoral identity, there are three key styles for effective leadership in cross-cultural ministry. First of all, there is relationship. The leader has a genuine sense of

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<sup>62</sup> Weems, Church Leadership, 34.

<sup>63</sup> Alan E. Nelson, Leading Your Ministry: A Moment of Insight is Worth a Lifetime of Experience (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 53-56.

<sup>64</sup> Ronald A. Heifetz and Donald L. Laurie, “The Work of Leadership,” Harvard Business Review, Jan.-Feb. 1997, 134. Dr. Scott Cormode handed out this article for his class at Claremont School of Theology, Spring semester, 1998.

compassion and community. A pastor, as a leader, needs a good understanding of relationship to build a healthy community. Lucia Ann McSpadden says, “Consistently, both the clergy and the laypersons told stories and gave illustrations of the basic truth that *relationships are key to developing trust and respect across cultural and racial lines.*”<sup>65</sup> Second, there is mission. The leader, as a pastor, has to have a strong sense of mission in the world. This mission work provides a future way to the leader’s faith and the group’s life. Our churches must include perspectives of mission for cross-culture in our work. Third, there is organization. The leader, especially the leader of cross-cultural ministry, is concerned for the well-being of the organization such as its structure, committees, policies, and procedures. In order to achieve the group’s purpose, a leader must make a good organization. The pastor, as a leader, must work with people in her/his organization. Leaders are not in a vacuum. Therefore, there is a dynamic relationship between a leader and a community. Pastoral leaders must respond to many behavior patterns by their leadership styles in each community. Identity is the core element to develop for a leader to become effective.

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<sup>65</sup> McSpadden, 99.

## CHAPTER 5

### Theological, Biblical, and Practical Understanding across Cultures: Cross-Cultural Theology

#### Historical Approach to Theology

Christians are living in both their religious communities and in the wider cultures of their surroundings. To approach cultures from theological and biblical perspectives, cultural diversity should be considered. There is cultural diversity in the Bible, which includes cross-cultural stories. Therefore, biblical scholars study the diversity in the Bible to know the relationship of the community of faith and the Bible in cultural perspective.<sup>1</sup> Many theologians have studied the influence of cultures with Christian faith for their own theological work. Kathryn Tanner, in the book Theories of Culture: A New Agenda for Theology, mentions the nature of diversity with culture: “Diversity is the product of the effort to be a Christian in different cultural context.”<sup>2</sup> Christians think about the relationship of Christ and culture in diversity for theological answers.

Recently, a theological trend is thinking, working, and practicing within one’s own situations by using different principles. Furthermore, we have the Bible which has been written in the community of faith through the ages and cultures. Cultural values and concepts are important for doing theology. Daniel J. Adams introduces four basic methodologies, in the book Cross-Cultural Theology: Western Reflection in Asia, for contemporary theological work: classical systematic theology, philosophical theology,

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<sup>1</sup> See James D. G. Dunn, Unity and Diversity in the New Testament: An Inquiry into the Character of Earliest Christianity, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London: SCM Press; Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1990).

<sup>2</sup> Tanner, 157.

political theology, and contextual theology.<sup>3</sup> Adams points out one example: “Asia characteristically views relationships between opposites as dipolar, summed up in the word ‘both/and,’ while the West tends to view reality in dualistic terms, summed up in the words ‘either/or.’”<sup>4</sup> However, there is a common ground that the church is for the context of theology. Especially, contextual theology focuses on “the interpretation of the Christian faith in cross-cultural situations.”<sup>5</sup> Contextual theology responds from church to the historical and cultural context. Therefore, contextual theology is the best method to study cross-cultural ministry. However, Adams concludes that four methodologies have to interact in a theological pluralistic scene. Most important, each culture has to be open to others toward communication for unity. Particularly, Christians have to know their calling to be “‘ambassadors of reconciliation’ in a divided and violent world.”<sup>6</sup> In this chapter, Karl Barth and H. Richard Niebuhr as classical theologians will be used for understanding cross-cultural theology. Also, some terms such as Christology, reconciliation, transformation, incarnation, marginality, and ecumenical movement will be studied.

### Karl Barth’s Christology: Reconciliation

Karl Barth, perhaps more than any other contemporary theologian, was conscious of the historical *Sitz-im-Leben* (sitting in life) of his thought and theology. Barth's theology of socio-political reality has a relationship to Christology. The theological basis of Barth's theology of socio-political reality is based upon the doctrine of

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<sup>3</sup> Daniel J. Adams, Cross-Cultural Theology: Western Reflection in Asia (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1987), 73-84.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 76.

<sup>6</sup> H. Russell Botman, “Gospel and Culture,” in One Gospel-Many Cultures, ed. Mercy Amba Oduyoye and Hendrik M. Vroom, 168.

reconciliation. Reconciliation is closely bound up in Christology as it is working in Jesus Christ who brings about reconciliation. Barth's theology is expressed in his Church Dogmatics,<sup>7</sup> which leads directly, inevitably and necessarily to radical political theology throughout the doctrine of reconciliation or atonement, which is crucial in Christian theology. It concerns the heart of the Christian gospel. Traditional theology treated the person and work of Christ separately. Barth sees the reality of Jesus Christ and his work centered in God's act of reconciliation and it is in light of this comprehensive unity or dialectical Christology that he restructures and restates the traditional doctrines.<sup>8</sup> In Barth's Church Dogmatics, the doctrine of reconciliation is doubly vital because of its unique and comprehensive scope. For Barth, the primal fact of existence is that God has, in Jesus Christ, reconciled the world to himself. Jesus Christ is the Lord not only of the Church but also of the world. Since this is so, the world, including the socio-political sphere, is viewed not as lost but as reconciled. It means that the world is not an object of God's wrath but rather of his reconciling love. Jesus Christ is still at work carrying on the process of reconciliation.

The heart of the doctrine of reconciliation starts from Jesus Christ after all. "The content of the doctrine of reconciliation is the knowledge of Jesus Christ who is (1) very God, that is, the God who humbles himself, and therefore the reconciling God, (2) very man, that is, man exalted and therefore reconciled by God, and (3) in the unity of the two the guarantor and witness of our atonement."<sup>9</sup> The first of the Christological aspects means that Jesus Christ is "very God." In elaborating that thought Barth

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<sup>7</sup> Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics, trans. G. W. Bromiley (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1961). Especially, I deal with "The Doctrine of Reconciliation" (Church Dogmatics, 4.1: 79-154).

<sup>8</sup> Barth explains the concept of unity throughout the name and title of "Jesus Christ." See Karl Barth, Dogmatics in Outline, trans. G. T. Thomson (New York: Philosophical Library, 1949), 65-71.

<sup>9</sup> Barth, Church Dogmatics, 4.1, 79.

includes a discussion of the state of humiliation and the priestly office. As a result of the self-humiliation of God, the Holy Spirit awakens the church.<sup>10</sup> It is a good model for cross-cultural theology. A distinctive feature of Barth's doctrine of reconciliation is that the nature of the deity of Jesus Christ is related to his humiliation. It is precisely in his humiliation manifested in his life and consummated on the cross that God proves himself to be the high, exalted, holy one who inhabits eternity. Here, God reveals himself as he really is, God with us and for us and our salvation in the crucified Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the revelation of God, his reconciliation of the world only as the fulfillment of Israel's history in which God proves himself and his faithfulness.

There is the second Christological aspect of the doctrine of reconciliation: Jesus Christ is "very man." Barth discusses the state of exaltation and the kingly office. The reconciliation of God embraces at one and the same time the humiliation of the Son of God and the exaltation of the Son of Man. Jesus Christ is true God in self humiliation on the cross and so atoning; he is also and in consequence true and exalted man. He is true man, indeed the only true man. He shares our humanity, and "the love of God in Jesus Christ brings together Himself with all men and all men with Himself."<sup>11</sup> The exaltation of Jesus Christ occurs in its totality in the whole of his life. It is in this total context that Jesus Christ is royal man, true, new, reconciled, exalted man. This exaltation of man is the correspondence in Jesus Christ of the Son's condescension. Barth can call it an exchange where the Son of God comes to where we are and in the same act lifts us up to where he is. For this reason, Jesus Christ is not isolated from what he does in humanity and the church.

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<sup>10</sup> See Barth, Dogmatics in Outline, 71.

<sup>11</sup> Barth, Church Dogmatics, 4.1, 105.

The third and final Christological aspect of Barth's doctrine of reconciliation is that Jesus Christ is "God-man."<sup>12</sup> This means that the third aspect concerns mainly the revelation of the two previous aspects: "the Lord who became a servant and the servant who became Lord, the reconciling God and reconciled man."<sup>13</sup> Jesus Christ as the reconciler is the one mediator between God and man. The reconciliation accomplished by Jesus Christ is revealed and active as he speaks his prophetic word, makes known his work as reconciler. In short, its heart or core is the Christological principle called "Jesus Christ." For Barth the name and title "Jesus Christ" is really only a term for the ever-recurring event in which the gulf between man and God is bridged.<sup>14</sup> This unity is connected with the incarnation. It implies, further, that the incarnation is itself the reconciliation. Barth rightly begins with the unity of Jesus Christ in His being as God and man and in the relationship of this to what he does. It tells a story, the particular history of God and man in union, relationship and following in Jesus Christ.

Conclusively, for Barth, Jesus Christ is the Lord (divine) who humbles Himself and so atones; at the same time He is man reconciled, exalted to lordship. Reconciliation is completed in this movement with its two moments of coming down and lifting up. There is a third aspect where Jesus Christ, the reconciler, risen from the dead, is mediator and declares His own reconciliation to man. Thus, Barth sees them in the unity of God and man in reconciliation and centers this on the Cross and the Resurrection as the integrating factor in the being and work of Christ.<sup>15</sup> God's reconciliation of man

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 135. This "God-man" means "the Son of God who as such is this man, this man who as such is the Son of God."

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 136.

<sup>14</sup> See "Jesus Christ the Mediator," *ibid.*, 122-28.

<sup>15</sup> The Cross is the symbol of the reconciliation of opposites: the sign of human hatred and love of God. By the Cross, Jesus Christ created the new humanity, a reconciled world within the divided world, with a dynamism and historical activity that touches us today and will endure forever. The revolutionary



and the world has already occurred. This is the point at which theology and ministry differs from much of the theological tradition of Western Christianity. Therefore, Barth's Christology for reconciliation supports the cross-cultural ministry that has to connect two or more cultures.

### H. Richard Niebuhr's Christ and Culture: Transformation

H. Richard Niebuhr addresses the question about Christ and culture in the book, Christ and Culture. This book is considered the beginning point for modern thought about the subject: "Christ's answer to the problem of human culture is one thing, Christian answers are another; yet his followers are assured that he uses their various works in accomplishing his own."<sup>16</sup> In his book, Niebuhr focuses on the relation of Christ and culture by identifying five aspects of Christ to show God's work with humanity: "Christ against culture"; "The Christ of culture"; "Christ above culture"; "Christ and culture in paradox"; and "Christ the transformer of culture." Most Christians have favored Christ the transformer as a clue to the appropriate relations of Christ and culture. Also, churches think that they have a responsibility to transform cultures. However, the five types of the relation of Christ and culture are good resources for missionaries as well as cross-cultural ministry, and continue to be alive in the church. Even though Niebuhr was fond of "Christ the transformer of culture," he mentioned for us that "the problem of Christ and culture can and must come to an end only in a realm beyond all study in the free decisions of individual believers and

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work of God is this resurrection. The Resurrection is the "beginning of a new world" and completes the "proclamation of victory" (Barth, Dogmatics in Outline, 122-23).

<sup>16</sup> Niebuhr, 2.

responsible communities.”<sup>17</sup> Furthermore, churches can suggest that ministers, counselors, and caregivers should understand Niebuhr’s five types for effective ministry in the relation of Christ and culture. After Niebuhr, many theologians have studied the relation between Christ and culture from different perspectives.

### Theology of Marginality: Incarnation

To understand Christianity in culture, Jung Young Lee, in his book Marginality: The Key to Multicultural Theology,<sup>18</sup> uses the negative (In-Between) and positive (In-Both) definitions of marginality for the holistic (In-Beyond) marginality as a new way. From his new meaning of marginality, he defines a new marginal person in-beyond: “The new marginal person is a liberated person, a person who is truly free, because each is a whole person and able to be fully present in the world. Because the new marginal person is whole, he or she reconciles two opposing worlds unto the self. The new marginal person is a reconciler and a wounded healer to the two-category system.”<sup>19</sup> It is inclusive thinking in relationship. Under the holistic definition of marginality, Lee implicates theology. The both/and way of thinking is used in doing theology for a multicultural hermeneutic paradigm. In order to explain the Christian perspective of marginality, Jesus Christ is a good example because He was “the new marginal person who was not only in-between but also in-both words. He was the man who lived in-beyond racial, cultural, gender, and class divisions, but was the man of the whole world. He was, therefore, the new marginal person *par excellence*.”<sup>20</sup> Also, the story of

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 233.

<sup>18</sup> The term of marginality came from social scientists. Marginality is a type of personality that arises out of the conflict of races and cultures.

<sup>19</sup> Jung Young Lee, 63.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 72.

incarnation should be understood from the thinking of marginality: [T]he stories of Jesus' birth and incarnation are stories of divine marginalization. During the incarnation, God was marginalized in Jesus-Christ."<sup>21</sup> Conclusively, the story of incarnation through the concept of marginality focuses on the Gospel of John 1:1-18, and re-examines our understanding of Jesus as a marginal person in the cosmos because of the process of divine marginalization.

The Bible says about incarnation: "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth."<sup>22</sup> God reveals the truth to both the community of the Bible and all of us, and transforms us for unity with Jesus Christ. The incarnation is the communication from God to us across cultures. The incarnation in the theology of marginality is the pattern of God for ministry across cultures. Namely, God became marginal through Jesus in the incarnation. Moreover, the incarnation of Christ as a marginal person is rooted in Biblical identity for cross-cultural ministry. It means that God encounters human cultures through Jesus seriously. David Fisher explains Jesus who lived across cultures and also included cultures in the perspective of marginality: "Jesus' point in crossing his cultural boundaries was far more than identification. He came to transform people and cultures. And while identifying with his culture, he also stood in judgment against it."<sup>23</sup> Jesus Christ's church, as a follower of the pattern of the incarnation, should take its culture seriously.

The Incarnation is the key to pastoral ministry across cultures. Sherwood G. Lingenfelter and Marvin K. Mayers explain the reason that the incarnation is necessary

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 79.

<sup>22</sup> John 1:14, NIV.

<sup>23</sup> Fisher, 42.

for cross-cultural ministry by the nature of cultural learning and perception: “The reason that incarnation (i.e., a willingness to begin to learn as if we are helpless infants) is necessary for cross-cultural ministry lies in the nature of cultural learning and perception. Culture is always learned and shared with others, and in this process people begin to perceive and respond to one another in culturally conditioned ways.”<sup>24</sup> Jesus Christ has God’s culture as well as human beings’ culture. Jesus’ mission is to connect God and human beings. Also, Jesus spoke from within His culture and with a Galilean accent to deliver God’s culture to people. Therefore, Jesus is the model for cross-cultural ministry. Jesus introduces God’s culture as the keynote of the mission to transform people in his parables and healing ministry. Jesus calls people to repentance and to acceptance of God’s culture that is the Good News for the poor.<sup>25</sup> Jesus shows the characteristics of the Kingdom of God as God’s culture in his ministry of salvation with love as a human being for justice and forgiveness as the closeness of God.<sup>26</sup> Like Jesus *the transformer of culture*, “the church is called to live itself into its world in order to transform it.”<sup>27</sup> Of course, we cannot incarnate wholly in other cultures. But, we have to adapt ourselves to become incarnate in other cultures. Lingenfelter and Mayers explains that we should try to become 150 percent persons in cultures:

The goal of every missionary, and possibly every Christian, should be to become at least a 150 percent person.... As finite human beings we are constrained by the limitations of our minds, our life histories, and our personal abilities. Few of us have the emotional strength to endure the changes that full incarnation in another culture would require.... So the goal

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<sup>24</sup> Sherwood G. Lingenfelter and Marvin K. Mayers, Ministering Cross-Culturally: An Incarnational Model for Personal Relationships (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1986), 22.

<sup>25</sup> See Matthew 11:5.

<sup>26</sup> See Matthew 6:25-33; 10:25-29.

<sup>27</sup> Fisher, 43.

of becoming at least partially incarnate in the culture of those to whom we minister is, by God's grace, within our grasp.<sup>28</sup>

Therefore, cross-cultural ministry requires understanding the difference of cultures with integrity. The key in cross-cultural ministry is incarnation for growth to fulfill Jesus' mission and "dependence upon God."<sup>29</sup> It is God's gift to experience incarnational leadership which is the pastoral ability "to incarnate godly concern for others and convey this realistically to others,"<sup>30</sup> and this is the love of Christ. The church loves this world, and shares with different cultures. The ministers prepare for incarnating in the Body of Jesus Christ as well as in their community for crossing cultures in diversity. Jesus is understood in a marginal way of thinking that means the total affirmation and the total negation of the world at the same time. The thought of marginality about incarnation provides Christians a vision which allows different people to live together. In cross-cultural ministry, incarnation is an important approach toward reconciliation and harmony.

#### Theology of Emptying-for-Filling: Paul's *kenosis* in Cross-Cultural Ministry

The New Testament offers some great examples of religious leadership for the purpose of the church. Paul is the best person to show his cross-cultural ministry practically and theologically. In Paul's ministry, there are many different cultural and religious perspectives: Jewish, Hellenistic and Roman. There is a strong cross-cultural interest between Jews and Greeks, a perspective that must enter into any interpretation of Paul. The relationship between Jerusalem and Gentile churches is developing slowly, and issues are being raised. Paul's teaching focuses on Gentiles across cultures. His

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<sup>28</sup> Lingenfelter and Mayers, 121.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 123.

<sup>30</sup> Southard, 83.

audiences vary, but he preaches for all people: “I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some.”<sup>31</sup> Paul's task is to understand and to utilize his background and experience to live and to proclaim the Christian gospel in a very diversified but alive environment. “Paul’s churches provide the model for anyone who seeks to know the true meaning of indigeneity. Culturally relevant churches are appropriate and understandable to the receptor; familiar forms that possess, adapt, and infill with Christian meaning.”<sup>32</sup> Paul knew his culture and the culture of his audiences.

The doctrine of Paul for supporting his cross-cultural ministry is *kenosis* (self-emptying) in Philippians 2:5-8: “Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!” This scripture shows us emptiness or nothingness for filling as a process in Paul’s theology of the incarnation. Jung Young Lee summarizes; “the self-emptying process signifies the transition from divinity to humanity. It serves as a means of divine incarnation in the world. God became human through emptying the divine nature.”<sup>33</sup> Jesus as the margin of marginality gave up everything for both God and people. “Both Jesus and Paul - - and many others before and after them - - suffered for their willingness to enter fully into the life-world of other people.”<sup>34</sup> Therefore, *kenosis* is a good metaphor for understanding discipleship. According to the doctrine of *kenosis*, Paul understands that Jesus Christ is “a new

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<sup>31</sup> 1 Cor. 9:22, NIV.

<sup>32</sup> Dean S. Gilliland, Pauline Theology and Mission Practice (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1983), 212.

<sup>33</sup> Jung Young Lee, 81.

<sup>34</sup> Wingeier, “Emptying-for-Filling,” 37-38.

marginal person who loves in-beyond by totally affirming the worlds that negate him.”<sup>35</sup>

In Philippians, emptiness is the transitional process to be a servant. John Hick, in his book The Metaphor of God Incarnate: Christology in a Pluralistic Age, says that “*kenosis* is a vivid metaphor for the self-giving quality of the divine love as revealed in Jesus, and for the self-giving love to which we are called as his disciples.”<sup>36</sup> Especially, the self-emptying process continues as the core theology for cross-cultural pastors and churches who are serving in two or more cultures.

Paul extended his interests toward inclusiveness. The letter to the Galatians represents an initial questioning of the Pauline gospel and the emergence of a major issue, the identity and relationship between Jew and Gentile. Paul mentioned his inclusiveness in Jesus Christ:

You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.<sup>37</sup>

As a leader, Paul responded to the unique situation and the issues in the various churches across cultures for inclusiveness in diversity. For cross-cultural ministry, he is a model for creative, dynamic and enterprising leaders. The most effective leaders adapt and argue their responses according to environmental and situational demands. Paul has a Christian vision of life as a servant of the Gospel with emptiness to be filled with the Word of God. In sum, Paul’s theology of *kenosis* and inclusiveness is a good approach

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 83.

<sup>36</sup> John Hick, The Metaphor of God Incarnate: Christology in a Pluralistic Age (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), 78.

<sup>37</sup> Galatians 3: 26-29, NIV.

in the area of religious leadership to affirm the love of Jesus with the act of self-fulfillment as the servant of all servants in this world across cultures.

### Ecumenical Movement: Work Together

The word "ecumenical" is given the implication of unity as well as that of world-wide. The ecumenical movement is a good model for working together across cultures "to fulfill together their common calling."<sup>38</sup> The ecumenical movement has to do with the integrity of the church, its nature and mission, and with faithfulness to the gospel. The ecumenical movement allows engagement in Christian ministry in such a way as to witness to the ministry of Jesus Christ. This movement for reconciliation creates a new community which is continually built up and sent forth by the good news of the gospel. Also the ecumenical movement embraces all such bodies on a global, regional, and local plane.

The term of "ecumenical" comes from the Greek word *oikoumene*, which means "not only to the coming and being together of churches, but more biblically to 'the whole inhabited earth' of men and women struggling to become what they were intended to be in the purpose of God."<sup>39</sup> Also, the word of *oikoumene* means the civilized world where Greek culture reigned and held people together. In the early centuries of the church, "ecumenical" begins to be used to represent the church as a whole, the universal church. The concept of *oikoumene* is refers to "not a matter of structure, but of dynamic, real relationships."<sup>40</sup> The ecumenical movement cannot speak of unity without speaking of

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<sup>38</sup> Marlin VanElderen, Introducing the World Council of Churches (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1990), 11.

<sup>39</sup> Konrad Raiser, Ecumenism in Transition: A Paradigm Shift in the Ecumenical Movement? (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1991), 85.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 86.



the Holy Spirit, for Christian existence manifests itself in concrete cultural, historical, and national forms. The unity which Christians now have is "in spite of the differences; in spite of the different cultures, histories, and national exigencies."<sup>41</sup> They are brought together in harmony as the gift of the Holy Spirit. The power of the Holy Spirit will unite the many and make them the one body of the one Lord. "*Koinonia* [fellowship] had its root in the gift of the Holy Spirit.... Thus *koinonia* binds all together in a spiritual community."<sup>42</sup> So evangelical teaching, based on the New Testament, is that the gift and working of the Holy Spirit indispensably involves the preaching of the Gospel.

Ecumenical encounter is also encounter across cultures. The concern for the exploration of the relation between the one and many cultures is not new on the ecumenical agenda. There is plenty of room for the Bible to throw light on the question of culture when the Christian faith is introduced into a given culture, as well as upon cultures which have had the gospel for many generations. The concern for exploring the interrelation between the gospel and cultures arises out of an acknowledgment of the central role of cultures in human society. It is the ecumenical movement which responds to the command and promise of God which comes to us in the church. The purpose of the ecumenical movement is thus clear to all. The goal can only be "visible unity"<sup>43</sup> in a faith that finds expression in a variety of formulations and in communion in a single Eucharist. This visible unity, which is the work of the Spirit, can only be attained through the gradual re-establishment of communion among the churches. This

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<sup>41</sup> Wanis A. Semaan, "The Holy Spirit and the Ecumenical Movement," Reformed World 37 (Dec. 1983): 279.

<sup>42</sup> Gerald F. Moede, Oneness in Christ: The Quest and the Questions (Princeton, NJ: Minute Press, Consultation on Church Union, 1981), 83.

<sup>43</sup> VanElderen, 43.

unity of the church is used in "relation to humankind as a whole."<sup>44</sup> Stirrings toward unity have acquired the shape and structure of inter-denominational and intra-denominational assemblies specifically devoted to the tasks and the problems of identifying, sifting, and overcoming divisions.

In order for churches' unity in Christ, it is essential to have a commonly accepted vision of the goal. The common goal of the ecumenical movement is that the unity of the Church is "placed on the unity of 'all in each place' [and in all cultures] in 'fully committed fellowship.'"<sup>45</sup> Also, the aim of the ecumenical movement is "bring the different Christian Churches more closely together on the way towards a full Christian unity."<sup>46</sup> In cross-cultural perspectives, the ecumenical movement is a way at the service of the churches which enables them to enter into fraternal conversation with each other, to co-operate in various fields, and to render witness together to the world.

Certainly, the ecumenical movement needs the theological and practical dimension, and the bond between them is welded in spiritual ecumenism, in the prayer of Jesus that unity may exist so that the world will believe him to be the Savior sent by God. The modern ecumenical movement has to provide a more radical resource of the church through the Gospel and the Spirit according to culture. It must be born again, renewed by the power of faith and obedience. The ecumenical movement must provide a constant reminder that Christian and non-Christian are called to be God's people from all nations and races by the Holy Spirit, called to be a sign and a promise of the New Humanity which God desires for the world. It also provides a necessary unity of

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<sup>44</sup> Samuel Amirtham and Cyris H. S. Moon, eds., The Teaching of Ecumenics (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1987), 42.

<sup>45</sup> Raiser, 5.

<sup>46</sup> Jeanrond, "Community and Authority," in On Being the Church: Essays on the Christian Community, ed. Colin E. Gunton and Daniel W. Hardy, 104.

witness and mission by which the secular order may be challenged by the Gospel. Only as a closely knit whole can the church of Jesus Christ exercise the church's function as the salt of the earth. It can provide us an opportunity for growth of the community of faith that restores the divided and damaged organism to its fullness, integrity and effectiveness. Finally, the ecumenical movement is a unique basic paradigm for thought and action beyond diversities and differences for cross-cultural ministry.

## CHAPTER 6

### Congregational Spirituality across Cultures for Leadership

#### Studying for Congregational Spirituality

To know congregational spirituality, I face a simple question: *What is spirituality?* The question is not able to cover all the meanings of spirituality because there are many different definitions. However, this question leads me to study congregational spirituality across cultures. Longman's Dictionary of Contemporary English defines the word "spirituality" as, "the quality of being interested in spiritual or religious matters, worship, prayer, etc."<sup>1</sup> One of the great definitions of spirituality has been offered by Urban Holmes, in the book Spirituality for Ministry:

(1) a human capacity for relationship, (2) with that which transcends sense phenomena; this relationship, (3) is perceived by the subject as an expanded or heightened consciousness independent of the subject's effects, (4) given substance in the historical setting, and (5) exhibits itself in creative action in the world.<sup>2</sup>

According to Holmes's definition, spirituality begins with the word "relationship" which means "a universal human capacity involving the whole person."<sup>3</sup> In other words, spirituality cannot be created by itself. Christian spirituality recognizes that there is a place for interest in self, together with concentration on God, Christian life, culture, and relationship in the community of faith. Even more, Christian spirituality is "the Christian life itself lived in and through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit."<sup>4</sup> Therefore, Christian spirituality means the whole of Christian life in response to the Spirit. Christian spirituality is the search for union with God, and means that people reflect on

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<sup>1</sup> Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, s. v. "Spirituality."

<sup>2</sup> Urban T. Holmes III, Spirituality for Ministry (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1982), 12.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Michael Downey, Understanding Christian Spirituality (New York: Paulist Press, 1997), 45.

their spiritual experience in light of who they are called to be as Christians and as a community. Those who pursue the way of spirituality perceive it as a way to develop a relationship between one's soul and God. Christians' spiritual life in the congregation of cross-cultural ministry enables them to share and grow through teaching, preaching, pastoral care, counseling, administration, and worship.

The congregation as a spiritual community has its unique formations in cultures for spiritual guidance. Elizabeth Liebert explains spiritual guidance for a congregation:

Spiritual guidance occurs through such varied pastoral activities as regular pastoral calls on congregants, letters of counsel or condolence, confessional or penitential guidance, preaching and worship, visits to the sick and imprisoned, sacramental preparation, pastoral counseling, and education in the texts, traditions and disciplines of the Christian community. Spiritual guidance employs all the means, including spiritual direction, that the church offers for the healing, sustaining, guiding, reconciling and nurturing of its members.<sup>5</sup>

As a community of faith, the congregation has distinctive patterns of spirituality.

Leaders of the congregation should identify the church's culture and needs for spiritual growth. For that, they have to study spirituality in their spiritual place to help people.

The study of congregational spirituality is concerned with human beings in relationship with God, in unique congregational cultures, in relationship to a tradition, in Jesus Christ, and in the light of contemporary events and societies. To understand congregational spirituality, many different methods can be used. Downey suggests four major methods in the study of spirituality: the theological method, the historical method, the

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<sup>5</sup> Elizabeth Liebert, Changing Life Patterns: Adult Development in Spiritual Direction, expanded ed. (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2000), 138-39.

anthropological method, and the appropriative method.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, Downey mentions three interrelated steps in the appropriative method:

First, one seeks to describe the spiritual life as experienced.  
The second step is critical analysis.  
The third step in such an approach is that of constructive interpretation.<sup>7</sup>

Those methods and steps can help us to understand congregational spirituality across cultures. The most important concern is that congregational spiritual formations should celebrate the gifts from God through the Holy Spirit in the relationship with God.

Among gifts, love is the major criterion for spiritual formation. This chapter will review three spiritual formations in my cross-cultural ministry for spiritual leadership: the early morning prayer, the worship service, and pastoral care and counseling.

### The Early Morning Prayer

Bardsdale UMC has many prayer groups for developing our spirituality such as the early morning prayer, Lenten prayer and study, Advent prayer and study, Women's prayer team, and walking prayer group. I emphasized prayers in cross-cultural ministry because it is important to spiritual direction. Prayer is a good way for spirituality. Through my prayers, I can be encouraged by God for my ministry. When I pray with my congregation, we are united by the power of the Holy Spirit. The chair of Staff-Parish Relations Committee wrote about pastoral prayers in her report to the Annual Conference: "Pastor Lee has a very strong prayer presence and spirituality. He is excellent at leading our congregation in prayer, whether it is during worship, Saturday

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<sup>6</sup> Downey, 123-31.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 129-30.

morning prayer, or personal visits. His prayers are always very heartfelt and sincere.”<sup>8</sup> Among them, the early morning prayer group is not useful for an English congregation like Bardsdale UMC. However, many Korean Christians attend this early morning prayer every day traditionally at 5:00 A.M. Korean Christians use the morning prayer in their individual spiritual practice. Douglas E. Wingeier introduces the morning prayer in Korea: “Korean pastors and a solid core of laity arise before dawn each day to attend five o’clock prayer meetings in their churches.”<sup>9</sup> In Scripture, prayer helps people to perceive the true importance of a particular meeting, reminding them of the real goal of their deliberation. Jesus prayed in the quiet, solitary times at places such as in the desert, on the mountain, on the lake, in the garden with others by himself. Especially, the early morning prayer came from Jesus’ model of prayer: “Very early morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.”<sup>10</sup> Prayer also helps people acknowledge their deepest feelings. Earle and Elspeth Williams describe that “prayer is the cornerstone”<sup>11</sup> for effective pastoral ministry. Furthermore, they assert that “praying is learning to be open in our depth to receiving and responding to the immanent and transcendent in our own and other’s reality and to the reality that is God.”<sup>12</sup> I prayed with people every Saturday morning at 6:30 A.M. when I served Bardsdale UMC as a Korean pastor. We had a simple format for this morning prayer: greeting, reading Scripture, sharing, and praying. Through the morning prayer,

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<sup>8</sup> Heather Hoffmann, “Pastor (Staff) Parish Relations Committee Report for the District Superintendent” of Bardsdale UMC, 2000.

<sup>9</sup> Douglas E. Wingeier, “Learning about Ministry from the Two-thirds World,” in Knowledge, Attitude, and Experience: Ministry in the Cross-Cultural Context, ed. Young-Il Kim (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1992), 132.

<sup>10</sup> Mark 1:35, NIV.

<sup>11</sup> Earle Williams and Elspeth Williams, Spiritually Aware Pastoral Care: An Introduction and Training Program (New York: Paulist Press, 1992), 15.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

we encouraged each other to further develop our spiritual lives. Sharon Hurd, who attended the Saturday morning prayer, comments about this:

I enjoy going to the 6:30 a.m. Saturday prayer times because 1) it gives me a chance to pray with you (Rev. Suk-Boo Lee) and Dan for our church and its members, “Wherever two or more of you are gathered...,” 2) it keeps me up to date on “needs” so I can pray more effectively by myself during the week, 3) it has deepened my love and friendship for you both, and 4) it gives me a chance to read and discuss scripture with other Christians and hear our joys and concerns with the passages we read so the scriptures come alive for me. I look forward to this time, as it enables me to be an active prayer warrior for our church and its friends and members.<sup>13</sup>

Like Sharon Hurd, some of our congregation members used this early morning prayer times for their valuable moments to enhance their spirituality. Here was another thought about this morning prayer that comes from Dan Michel: “With Pastor Lee’s guidance, a morning prayer group was formed to pray for our church family, community, nation and the world. Many of the concerns turned into joys when the power of prayer became a tool of healing and comfort.”<sup>14</sup> From my experience, personal prayer exists right at the center of spirituality for all cultural ministries. The early morning prayer is a wonderful opportunity to talk with God, and Christians can begin their spiritual lives daily like Jesus did by using one of the models from cross-cultural ministry.

### The Worship Service

As the Community of faith, our congregation worships together. We praise God’s grace and love. However, there are many negative responses regarding worship in cross-cultural ministry because of differences of worldview and tradition between

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<sup>13</sup> Quotation from Sharon Hurd’s writing. She is one of the members attending the Saturday morning prayer

<sup>14</sup> Quotation from Dan Michel’s writing.



preacher and worshipper. They struggle about worship length and preaching style and response from listeners, and theological interpretation. Of course, there are benefits, Lucia Ann McSpadden states, “one of the gifts that a cross-cultural-cross-racial appointment brings to a congregation is exposure to different styles of worship, different hymns, and different ways of gathering to praise God.”<sup>15</sup> Therefore, they have to consider that there are many concepts about worship in Christian theology. In The United Methodist Book of Worship, Christian worship is understood in “both its diversity and its unity” as “an encounter with the living God through the risen Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit.”<sup>16</sup> I describe Christian worship as God’s revelation through Jesus Christ and human beings’ response in their life. In Christian worship, the Holy Spirit works to disclose and communicate between God and human beings. Namely, spiritual ministry for worship focuses on the roles of God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, and human beings’ responses through their services, prayers, words, hymns, thanksgiving, and sacraments. Christian worship is the experience of salvation through the presence of God. In the worship service, Christians can think about their faith and renew their identity in relationship with God and Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit.

The harmony of the church through worship is one of the important elements of congregational spiritual formation. Christians meet many people who have different backgrounds in worship. The Holy Spirit is free to move them to worship in diverse ways. Our worship provides a chance to share vision and affirmation as the body of Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit. People gather together to share their concerns and joys

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<sup>15</sup> McSpadden, 86.

<sup>16</sup> The United Methodist Book of Worship (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1992), 13.

through their spiritual devotion. We become one body, one family, one tradition, and one community of faith through the worship service.

In Christian history, there are different patterns for Christian worship in communities.<sup>17</sup> The pattern of worship in the United Methodist Church is composed of historical traditions and practices in ministry. Bardsdale UMC with the cross-cultural minister followed the Basic Pattern of Worship of the UMC that has four important sections of worship “in spirit and in truth”: *Entrance, Proclamation and Response, Thanksgiving and Communion, and Sending Forth*.<sup>18</sup> The basic pattern of worship in the United Methodist Church had added more parts in worship following our local church’s tradition and the Christian calendar.

As a spiritual leader for this worship, I prayed for the guidance of the Holy Spirit and read Scriptures that are given from the Revised Common Lectionary. Every Wednesday at 10:00 A.M. I met with my worship team<sup>19</sup> to decide on our hymns and special worship order to discuss across cultures. I gave them the sermon’s title and subject. Therefore, I had to choose the sermon’s text to preach, read Scripture, and study the sermon’s topic before our worship team meeting. They suggested hymns for worship to match my sermon’s theme, and I usually followed their suggestions. During the week, I prayed, thought about my congregation, studied some commentary books, read newspapers, researched the Internet Web site, read books about my sermon topic, and collected other resources for storytelling. After I made the main points for my sermon notes, I began to write my sermon usually on Friday afternoon. I finished my

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<sup>17</sup> See Kathy Black, Worship across Cultures: A Handbook (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998). She studied worship as represented in six denominations and twenty one cultures.

<sup>18</sup> The United Methodist Book of Worship, 14 –15.

<sup>19</sup> The worship team was composed of the choir director, organist, the director of Handbells, and the pastor. I made this team for our worship plan and other rites.

first draft after Saturday morning prayer meeting. I revised my sermon by myself two or three times. Every Saturday at 5:00 P.M. I met with my English teacher who helped me in developing English skills. After that, I practiced the actual delivery of my sermon several times. When I was first appointed to this church, I preached over 25 minutes like Korean pastors usually did. Later, I preached between 17 and 20 minutes because I had to consider cultural difference in worship. I prepared several copies of my sermon for those hard of hearing to read during Sunday worship. I focused on this worship service as one of the important spiritual formations for developing our spirituality.

Bill Bartels wrote his thoughts about worship services with a cross-cultural minister. Bill's response regarding our spiritual worship across cultures is as follows:

Our cross-cultural ministry is one of teaching and learning together. Our cross-cultural ministry is that of invitation. Learning means doing the hard work of finding out how we speak; how we are heard. Add to this charge a cultural divide -- the challenge is increased. In music and service planning -- in ministry - Sunday to Sunday, week in and week out, we, the worship team, are called to cross the cultural divide -- to parse the colloquial phrases of English and the different speech types of Korean and English - to seek a voice which allows the long traditions of Bardsdale to be given voice by those who come to the table. And so we are invited, people invited to participate in coming to the table and leading the worship from both cultures.<sup>20</sup>

In fact, I developed our spirituality through my sermons and the worship services. I approached their cultures by dialogue and sharing. Congregation members understood my cultural interpretation in our worship service. We celebrated Jesus' Resurrection every Sunday across cultures.

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<sup>20</sup> Quotation from Bill Bartels' writing. He was a worship coordinator.

Finally, Bardsdale congregation has a special blessing song to sing together to be strong spirituality. It helped us to think about our spirituality and the presence of God in the worship service for all nations and cultures. God sends us into the world:

*The Bardsdale Parting Song*

May the God of peace be with you,  
Holding you in strong-fingered hands  
And may you be an instrument of God's peace,  
To those whose hands you hold;  
And may the blessing of peace  
Be with you, be with you, be with you.

Pastoral Care and Counseling

Pastoral care and counseling is important for the formation of spiritual ministry. Pastoral leadership comes from a spiritual relationship with God. In cross-cultural ministry, the differences between congregation members and pastors should be paid attention to. As a spiritual leader, a minister loves all the members and is part of their spiritual journey in personal ways. Personally, I met members of Bardsdale UMC as spiritual friends beyond cultures. I encouraged them to share their spiritual journey. I always have time to pray before I start my pastoral work, too, because my spiritual relationship with God through prayer is important as a spiritual leader.

As a pastor, one of the important attitudes is sharing spirituality with people of God. Pastors have to share a congregation's joys and concerns, and listen to them. In my cross-cultural ministry, I shared confidently with our congregation. I listened to their concerns and I shared mine. We opened our hearts in sharing. I shared the Word of God through my sermon, Bible Study, mailing, e-mails, and telephone calls. I visited

their homes to share love. Visitation is “a response to God’s grace in which caregivers initiate pastoral conversation that addresses issues of faith and strengthens the web of interconnections among members, and between the congregation and its larger community.”<sup>21</sup> As a Korean pastor in cross-cultural ministry, pastoral visitation is a gift for a congregation of another culture.

### Verbatim at Hospital

I will introduce one verbatim which I did when I visited a member of Bardsdale UMC who was hospitalized. I followed Nancy J. Gorsuch’s guidelines for practical concerns in visiting:

1. Review information about the person or family available from church records, phone, address, directions to the home or meeting place.
2. Phone in advance and begin by restating the purpose of the visit, etc.
3. Preparing for the scheduled visit involves prayer, with the assumption that God is present and at work in the person’s life, in their family or network of friends, in the congregation, and in the wider community.
4. The caregiver will need a Bible and perhaps a liturgical resource and communion kit if communion is to be shared.
5. Practical considerations when entering another person’s home include arriving on time, accepting but not expecting hospitality.<sup>22</sup>

The following verbatim shows that pastoral visitations are important to encourage and care for people’s spirituality whatever their cultures are.

### Introduction

Mrs. Baker (her name was changed to preserve confidentiality) has been a member of our church for a long time. She is an active person in lay ministries. She is a 57-year-old Caucasian. Her husband is a member of our church, too. They are religious people and involved in our activities. They have some physical problems. Mr. Baker received surgery because of a hip problem. Mrs. Baker has suffered due to her diabetes during the last 4 years. Also, she feels pain when she walks and moves because her

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<sup>21</sup> Nancy J. Gorsuch, Pastoral Visitation (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999), 7.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 70-72. I summarize guidelines from this book that I adopted for my pastoral visitation.

right leg is not in good condition. I visited them several times after I was appointed as the pastor of Bardsdale UMC. I already knew of her suffering. When I visited her house, I prayed with her and her husband. Their children do not live with them. She enjoys her life at Bardsdale with our congregation. On the morning of April, 13, 2002 at 7:00 A.M., I received one phone call from Mr. Baker to say that his wife was in Santa Paula Hospital because of her diabetes. I called Santa Paula Hospital to check on her condition. I talked with her and made an appointment for my visitation in the afternoon of the same day. I visited her at 4:30 p.m.

*P: Pastor, Suk-Boo Lee*

*C: Mrs. Baker*

P1: *(I entered Mrs. Baker's room, and approached her bed.)* Hi! Mrs. Baker.

C1: Suk-Boo! *(She turned her face toward me, and called my name.)*  
Come in! I have been waiting for you.

P2: You are waiting for me because you want to see me and talk with me.

C2: Yes! I want to see you. I need to talk with you. Do you already know what I want to say?

P3: Well, I know what you are concerned about, but I don't know what you want to say.

C3: Suk-Boo! Have a seat! Here is your chair. *(She pointed to a chair at the end of the room.)*

P4: Thank you! *(I had a seat and looked at her.)* You want to talk about what happened this morning. How are you feeling now? Are you feeling better than this morning?

C4: *(She smiled.)* Correct! I am OK. But, I was angered this morning because I felt God did not care about me. I thought God did not remember me anymore. Maybe, God gave up on me. Suk-Boo! I think that God is too busy to care for me. *(Her eyes moistened with tears.)*

P5: You felt God forgot you because you are still in pain. *(I spoke slowly with soft a voice.)*

C5: Yes! Yes! Why am I living in so much pain? This morning, I thought that I was going to die. I could not wake up because of high blood sugar. Because of my diabetes I have suffered in my right shoulder and hand. Did you know this? *(She wiped away her tears.)*

P6: Yes! I knew. Your husband called me and told me about your suffering. Especially, I know of your suffering because my mother has suffered for a long time like you. Of course, she is still a diabetic patient, but she is better now. I knew of her pain and yours too.... *(pause)* At that time, she felt pain in her knee because of her diabetes. *(I expressed my sympathy by talking and using a quiet voice with her.)*

C6: Your mother, too?

P7: I think that she has suffered for 4 or 5 years. She did not want to move because of her pain.

C7: Is she OK now? I think diabetes can't be healed. Is she OK now?

P8: *(I felt that she wanted to hear my positive answer of hope.)* Yes, she is better now.

C8: Where is she now? In Korea?

P9: Yes, she is in Korea. She is living in Korea with my father and my brother's family. She has always been treated for her diabetes by her doctor. Also, she carefully controls the foods she eats.

C9: I know that. I have to eat carefully. I need practice to make my body strong. But.... *(She did not continue to talk.)*

P10: Are you feeling too much pain to speak? *(I was worried about her condition.)*

C10: No! I am OK, Suk-Boo. But, but, *(She hesitated.)* I am a smoker. I need to stop smoking because it is harmful for my health. But, it is not easy. I will stop.... I promise....

P11: You already know you need to stop smoking for your health. I agree with you. Smoking is not good for us. Also, our body is God's temple. We have to take care of ourselves because we are part of the body of Christ, the church. Of course, I don't know if your diabetes and pain come from your smoking. However, it is not good for us, especially Christians.

C11: *(She smiled.)* Suk-Boo! I know you are our pastor, a strong spiritual pastor. *(We laughed together.)* I know about that. I will do my best. I have hope because your mother is better now.

P12: Oh! Yes! My mother is OK now. Furthermore, I saw many patients who were healed or improved their diabetes through treatment at Queen's Hospital of Hawaii when I worked as the chaplain. I saw their pain and suffering. I understood their prayers.

C12: I think I would not have the strength to do this without my prayers for God's mercy. After my husband had received surgery, we prayed more and more because he was helped by your visitation and prayer before his surgery. We appreciated it. At that time, your prayer was powerful for him and me when you visited.

P13: Thank you for mentioning that. As your pastor, I pray for you and all our congregation. I am here to pray for you too.

*(At that time, a nurse entered her room, and checked her blood pressure and body temperature. The nurse said that she was normal.)*

C13: I will stay here two more days to rest. My doctor will check my condition. I hope to go home before Sunday. I have to arrange for a liturgist, the flowers and greeters, and acolytes for our worship.

P14: Don't worry about that. Our church secretary will take care of this Sunday. I always appreciate your commitment to our ministry and your caring way with everyone. You do a great job!

C14: Yes! I think I am a good Christian. Why does God give me this pain? I still don't understand? Why me? Of course, I don't mean that someone else take my pain. My question is why we suffer even though we are good Christians, like your mother? Because of my sins? *(She drank her water.)*

P15: In fact, that is my question. I am sure that God did not give you this hardship. I preached about Job's story in the Old Testament last Sunday.

C15: I know you sent me your sermon by mail. I read your sermon. But, still I have a question, "Why do bad things happen to good people?"

P16: In my sermon, I introduced Rabbi Kushner's book, Why Bad Things Happen to Good People?

C16: I didn't read that book. But, your sermon helped me understand my question. I think I need prayer.



- P17: I think so. We need prayer for God's healing love in our lives. I believe that God will be with us in our suffering or happiness, good or bad. It is God's teaching through the story of Job for us. Our Jesus prayed at Gethsemane in Matthew 26:39: "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will." Amen! We need to pray like Jesus did.
- C17: I will pray like Jesus. In the Bible, Jesus healed many people who were sick. I believe that Jesus will heal me. (*I saw a Bible on the table.*)
- P18: I pray that Jesus Christ will be with you and heal you. How about praying now? May I pray for you and your doctor, and your family, especially your husband?
- C18: Why not? Suk-Boo, please pray for my husband too. He loves me so much. He cares about me. I can never repay him for all he's done. Please, pray for him.
- P19: Let us pray! (*I held her hands and prayed.*) "Gracious God! Your servant prays for your daughter who needs your healing love now. She needs your encouragement to endure her pain and suffering in faith. She suffers because of her physical pain. Please, be with her. I pray that she becomes better and better, and then works for your ministry. Please, listen to her prayers and wishes. May you respond in her life. Especially, I pray for her husband, Mr. Baker. He loves and cares for her unconditionally. It is a beautiful love. Please, bless his sacrificial love. Bless their faithful love. I pray for her doctors and nurses who care for her. May the Holy Spirit hold their hands and guide them. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen!"
- C19: Amen! Thank you! Suk-Boo.  
Hopefully, I'll see you this coming Sunday. If I am not there, my spirit will be with you and everyone. Thank you, again!
- P20: I will pray for you, and please pray for yourself. See you soon!  
Bye now!
- C20: Good bye! Say hello to Sung-Hee and Frances.
- P21: I will. Thank you!

### Evaluation for Verbatim

#### 1. Holistic Assessment (Physical, Family Systems, Psycho-Social, Cultural and Social Issues):

She is living with her husband. Her two daughters live in Northern California. Sometimes, she visits her daughters with her husband. I do not recognize any problems in their marriage life. Through my several visitations, I feel that they love and understand each other. However, she has been suffering due to her diabetes and shoulder pain. Her husband received hip surgery. Therefore, they are concerned for their health and treatment. In our community of faith, she is an active person involved in our programs. Also, she helps me as a coordinator for worship. Even if she has hardships due to suffering, she supports many people who are disabled.

#### 2. Spiritual Assessment (Belief/Meaning, Vocation/Obligation, Experience/Emotion, Courage/Growth, Community, Guidance):

In conversation, she said, "God gave up on me" (C4). Also, she mentioned her confusion about her own suffering. She is a religious person. Sometimes, she joins in the Saturday Morning Prayer to pray and share her concerns. Nevertheless, she has a question, "Why me?" However, she is not complaining to God, but asking to know God's will. Spiritually, she does her best to approach God and Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. She depends on God, and believes in the healing love of Jesus Christ. She is courageous as she finds her way through her suffering and illness.

#### 3. How did the Pastor feel about the patient and/or situation?

I was sad and understood her painful feelings. I have had a lot of experiences like this case because I worked as a resident Chaplain for one year at Queen's Hospital in Hawaii. I could pray from my heart because I knew her suffering. Also, I was comfortable when I met her because I had visited her before this visit. Furthermore, I was happy as a pastor when she said, "I am waiting to see you" (C1). I felt that she wanted our conversation as spiritual friends. I could talk to her and pray for her in this situation.

#### 4. How did the Pastor function and/or utilize the Spiritual Assessment in giving care? What did the Pastor learn from this case?

As the pastor, my function in this case was caring and understanding through my visit. Her husband called me to notify me of her hospitalization. I responded to his phone call by making an appointment to visit. In our conversation, I followed her thinking and

listened to her story. I tried to clarify her feelings and spiritual questions. She knew her question as well as the answer. I helped her express her pain and suffering in front of me. She already knew about the harmful smoking. She knew Jesus' healing ministry. She needed her pastor who could listen to her painful story. I was there for her. Also, I touched her spiritual feelings through my retelling of the sermon on Job. As their family pastor, I encouraged her to keep in prayer. I prayed for her to endure in this situation. I blessed her and especially her husband. I believe the Holy Spirit will be with them and will enable them to endure this hardship in faithful love.

#### 5. What are the plans for continued care and follow-up?

I continued to visit her at the hospital and at her home. She and her husband welcomed my visit. Sometimes, I invited a layperson to visit with me. They shared their concerns and joys, and comforted each other. As the pastor for this congregation, I think that visitation is one of the most important parts of pastoral care. Regularly, I visit our members and talk to them through phone calls. Also, I send my sermon by mail and e-mail to members who are hospitalized and sick. Of course, I send my sermons to Mrs. Baker. I continue to pray for her and all my congregation members.

In conclusion, I learned from spiritual formation that I have to pay attention to cultural issues for spirituality because "all spiritual seekers must at some point live and think in ways that challenge the culture."<sup>23</sup> As the providers for congregational spirituality, pastors have many roles in their spiritual ministry. I, as the pastor, have to prepare and guide our worship and Bible study, lead many committees through administration, and offer spiritual direction through pastoral care and counseling. One of my main tasks as the pastor for spirituality is "to help men and women discover precisely in the actual messy situations of their daily lives, the way in which, without their being aware of it, Jesus has chosen to give himself to them, and how they are to 'go

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<sup>23</sup> Carolyn Gratton, The Art of Spiritual Guidance: A Contemporary Approach to Growing in the Spirit (New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1992), 49.

forth and bear fruit' as a result of that choice (John 15:6)."<sup>24</sup> As spiritual leaders across cultures, pastors and care-givers focus on congregational spirituality.

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 180.

## CHAPTER 7

### Summary and Conclusion: Culture and Leadership

#### Summary

There are many ethnicities, colors, languages, traditions, generations, and cultural practices in the United States of America where I minister now as I write this project. It is the context in which to understand cross-cultural ministry. People, especially those in Southern California, cannot live in only their own culture in the society of diversity. They are living with others and multi-cultures in diversity. We have to honor what others have and share with others. Especially, it requires us to develop cultural understanding to meet at the boundaries of cultures for ministry. It is the way to bridge and connect cultures. Furthermore, pastors as disciples of Jesus Christ should follow what Jesus did. God indicated His mission through the incarnation of Jesus, who was filled with the love of God toward human beings. Jesus enhanced God's vision through His leadership and practice as a marginal person. As His disciples, spiritual leaders need their calling for church leadership with cultures to fulfill God's vision. The relationship between Christ and cultures should be considered in diversity. For cross-cultural ministry, H. Richard Niebuhr's Christ the transformer of culture is provided as one of the models. Practically, many cultural issues regarding effective ministry were brought by ministers and laypersons who are in cross-cultural settings. Cultural issues are an important key for effective pastoral leadership for transformation.

When I analyze some practical issues, spirituality in cultures is the most important element for effective leadership. Spirituality is the common tool for sharing spiritual culture in the community of faith. Through my spiritual ministry for my congregation's

spiritual growth, I have reached the conclusion that Christian spirituality is an intimate relationship between God and persons. Spirituality is rooted in God's grace, looking toward the fullness of God's reign with love. Prayer is the center of Christian spirituality through the spiritual journey. I dealt with prayer as the most important tool for growing our spirituality. Communally, we are the people of God, known by the love that created, sustained, and made us the one body of Christ. We practice our spiritual formations in community worship, pray together in the early morning, and share together through pastoral care and counseling.

Pastors in cross-cultural ministry have a recognized role as a spiritual guide in ministry. The pastor may be the congregation's spiritual director and leader for both the pastor's spiritual growth and the people's spiritual development. In cross-cultural ministry, pastors help people drink deeply from the wells of God's love and teach that compassion in vision can help liberate all people across cultures. Both pastors and congregations must do their best to connect the relationship between the pastor's culture and the congregation's cultures in their cross-cultural setting, and to realize God's vision for reconciliation.

### Vision for Effective Leadership in Cross-Cultural Ministry

I have started this project with these questions in my cross-cultural ministry as a Korean pastor for a different ethnic congregation: "*Who am I? Why am I here in the cross-cultural ministry? What are my roles as one of the pastors for cross-cultural ministry? Why does God call me for ministry? How do I minister? and Do I love them?*" My interviews and resources have helped me to find my answer for effective leadership

in cross-cultural ministry. Especially, the book, The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Pastor,<sup>1</sup> provides many ideas to find answers to my questions. In this book, four critical questions are important for me to know my identity as a pastor. Fisher suggests, “our identity is found in his Son, who calls us to his service.... Our sense of purpose and success must come from our identity as Christ’s servants.”<sup>2</sup> It is easy to say this, but it is easy to forget in our ministry. All Christians are persons of Christ. As ordained ministers, all of us must remember that God called and ordained us for the people of God. Pastors as spiritual leaders work for God through the guidance of the Holy Spirit as a disciple of Jesus Christ with their own *Calling*. The assurance of this pastoral call changes an inescapable burden to joyous labor.

In order to be disciples for Christ, we have to know where we are now. This means God’s people and their culture where I am serving as a pastor. The incarnation is the best answer for finding where we are. David Fisher emphasizes: “God takes human cultures seriously. Christ’s church, if it follows the pattern of the Incarnation, will take its culture seriously too. Pastors, as leaders of God’s people, must lead the way by living themselves into the lives of their people. Then the church must live itself deeply into its culture.”<sup>3</sup> It must be the vision for all Christians, especially pastors in cross-cultural ministry. The pastoral ministry is work in the name of Jesus Christ, not human beings’ pride or knowledge, because the head of the church is Jesus Christ. The living Christ in this church empowers people to act with His power and presence.

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<sup>1</sup> Fisher, The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Pastor: A Vision Based on the Ministry of Paul.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 28.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 42.

### Suggestion for Cross-Cultural Leadership

Pastoral leadership is a calling from God to work for “reform and new life” and ministry “through which we serve God.”<sup>4</sup> Ministry exists in four worlds:

(1) the world of the thought-forms of the time expressed abstractly in philosophy; (2) the teaching of the church at this time (theology); (3) the services provided in ordinary church life; (4) the social context in which people live. Sometimes these come together, sometimes one or more of the four worlds are apart from each other and society tears into its own flesh or the church fails to develop a healthy life.<sup>5</sup>

The pastors and leaders of cross-cultural ministry whom I interviewed, agreed to have their own leadership as spiritual leaders. For example, one of the pastors has worked to establish a strong laity-centered ministry and has focused on members’ spiritual growth. For pastoral leadership of cross-cultural ministry, they suggest that pastors have to enhance their practical understanding of cultural differences. Both pastors and people in cross-cultural ministry should remember that they are Christians even if they are different.

I would like to suggest three norms for effective leadership in cross-cultural ministry. First of all, leadership begins with people. Many churches are interested in other aspects such as new buildings, new programs, and memberships’ rolls. But, the Church is people. The Church includes all people regardless of their skin color, their properties, or ages. Namely, the people in ministry include all people because we are one in Christ. The purpose of pastoral leadership in cross-cultural ministry is to care for the people whom God has given to us, even if they are strangers to each other. In cross-cultural ministry, pastors and lay people should understand each culture in order to know one another because each culture comes from people: culture means “the patterned way of life produced by a people through which its members are formed and shaped by the

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<sup>4</sup> Harris W. Lee, 25.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas F. O’Meara, Theology of Ministry (New York: Paulist Press, 1983), 24.



manner of their belonging.”<sup>6</sup> Pastors should pay attention to the main culture of their churches to know their people. And then, the communication with other cultures is the center of our cross-cultural perspectives for leadership. For effective dialogue, pastors who are serving in cross-cultural ministry have to prepare for language development to consider the people and their culture in love without misunderstanding. Good communication is the best way to avoid isolation from people who have different cultures. A leader listens to their ideas and thoughts for ministry through open communication. Then, both the congregation and the pastor make common agreements relating to their vision. However, pastors have to work to make “the mission, vision, and values”<sup>7</sup> for people in order to be effective leaders through their own cultural backgrounds and create their new cultures. As spiritual leaders, pastors are serving the people and community in the name of Jesus Christ.

The second norm I suggest is team leadership. Cross-cultural appointed pastors need to work with many lay people perhaps more than pastors who are serving the same cultural/racial congregations. It is team ministry to share everything through our worship, the meeting of committees, and the newsletter. Weems describes teams that have “high motivation, energy, and commitment.”<sup>8</sup> Through teamwork, each of them knows their own role in our whole ministry. They dance together as partners in one team. It is called “multiple leadership,” which means “a creative way of working together as needed and appropriate to accomplish a shared vision.”<sup>9</sup> For example, John Wesley shared his leadership with his followers. Examples are the use of lay preachers,

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<sup>6</sup> Weems, Church Leadership, 99.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 113.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 71.

<sup>9</sup> Weems, Leadership in the Wesleyan Spirit, 60.

the leadership of women, and persons of different class and race. His leadership helped the people to discover their talents and vision for ministry. Like Wesley's multiple leadership, cross-cultural ministers have to open their culture and work together with many different people as a team to hear their voices because pastors lead them to make one beautiful picture for ministry.<sup>10</sup> For that purpose, the vision statement should be reviewed every year together because it is "a picture of a preferred future"<sup>11</sup> for our church. Both should know that the church's vision is not for ministers or some leaders but all our members. Team ministry helps them to work and express their own voices for church leadership and invite all people to involve themselves in God's ministry through the making of a vision statement together. Team leadership includes the diversity of ideas and people for "unity of purpose, direction, and commitment, but never uniformity."<sup>12</sup> Also, team ministry in cross-cultural ministry helps to avoid a pastor's isolation because of barriers of language and culture.

The third suggested norm is connection for leadership. Pastors in cross-cultural ministry need to share with other pastors in cross-cultural ministry through connectionalism. If their denominations have Districts and Conferences, they need to have a closer relationship. Both pastors and congregations need open minds and hearts to listen to other voices to keep together "a commitment to do what God has called the church to do."<sup>13</sup> Connection builds them around mission, vision, and relationships for spiritual renewal. To learn and develop leadership across cultures, we connect many people who have passions to proclaim Jesus Christ, and professional people who work in

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<sup>10</sup> "Leadership is never fixed and static, but is fluid and dynamic." See Weems, Church Leadership, 74.

<sup>11</sup> Weems, Church Leadership, 39.

<sup>12</sup> Weems, Leadership in the Wesleyan Spirit, 93.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid. 110.

many different areas. For example, as I already have mentioned, Korean clergy who are serving in cross-cultural/racial ministry formed The National Association of Korean-American United Methodist Pastors Serving a Cross-Racial Appointment, and they have annual meetings to share and encourage each other to have integrity, passion, credibility, professional ethics, and holiness for God's ministry in connectional relationship.

### Effective Leadership toward Unity in Diversity across Cultures

Each person, group, and church has its own unique culture which is special and important: "The forms through which the church acts on behalf of the Kingdom of God come from the culture of a time and a place."<sup>14</sup> They are influenced by cultural factors. As a cross-cultural minister, my experiences across cultures have expanded my comprehension and opportunities for effective leadership. Each cultural background is in a relationship with other cultural situations. Cultural identity and diversity are developed for the benefit of pastors in their own ministry. Both pastors and congregations have to respect all cultures that have formed in our society, especially regarding church history. We must know about the interaction of various cultures in a cross-cultural setting, keeping in mind three core elements for effective leadership in cross-cultural ministry that are suggested by Toinette M. Eugene: "(1) cultural pluralism, which emphasizes the values and gifts of each culture; (2) cultural difference, which highlights the special features of each culture; and (3) cultural relateness, which looks to the new reality formed by the genuine coming together and dialogue between cultures."<sup>15</sup> All three are needed for a healthy cross-cultural ministry. It is not easy, but it is a good opportunity to experience Jesus' ministry, incarnation, and connectionism. For cross-

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<sup>14</sup> O'Meara, 20.

<sup>15</sup> Eugene, 373.

cultural ministry, following Scripture is the norm beyond cultural issues: “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”<sup>16</sup> We are able to understand, serve, and love people, following Jesus’ incarnational leadership, whatever their cultures are.

Finally, the role of the pastor is important for effective cross-cultural leadership in growing and changing communities. God calls us to work with God’s authority as builders to build God’s church in relationship. This refers to spiritual growth that includes moving people toward Jesus Christ. Leadership is a relationship process and about change. The purpose of cross-cultural ministry is to have all people as Jesus’ disciples to bridge cultures with love, hope, and faith. All pastors and people of churches are carpenters to build the house of God in our community, and farmers to nurture Christians to be like Christ through their cultures and neighborhoods. To be an effective minister for cross-cultural ministry, all children of God have to pray for the working of the Holy Spirit for good relationships with integrity, and develop the community of faith for the Kingdom of God at the boundaries.

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<sup>16</sup> Mark 10:45, NIV.

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